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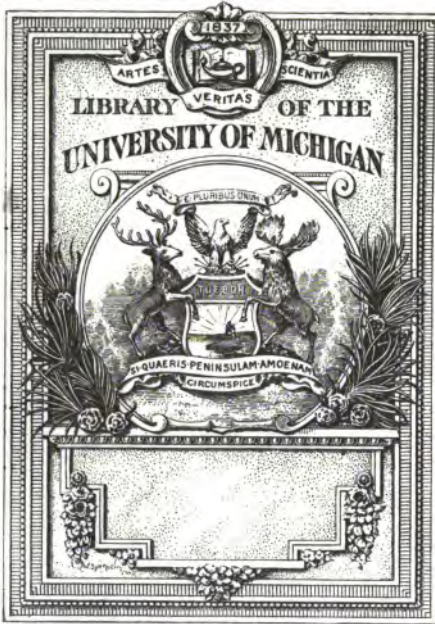
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THE GIFT OF
Mr. E. Hyatt.

Norbert Hyatt

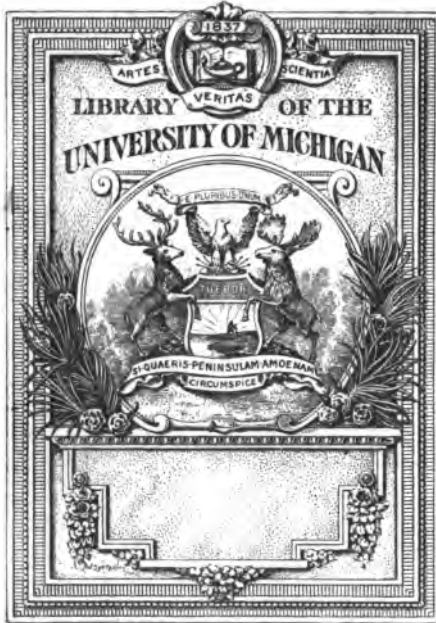
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THE GIFT OF
Mr. E. Hyatt.

Norbert Hyatt

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6

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

WITHIN THE HEDGE

THE CATHEDRAL

RUSSIAN LYRICS AND COSSACK SONGS

NOVELS:

A MODERN PROMETHEUS

THE CUCKOO'S NEST

A COSSACK LOVER

THE SIN OF ANGELS

Gift of Norbert Hyatt.

GABRIELLE
AND OTHER POEMS



GABRIELLE
AND OTHER POEMS

BY
MARTHA GILBERT (DICKINSON) BIANCHI



NEW YORK
DUFFIELD & COMPANY
1913

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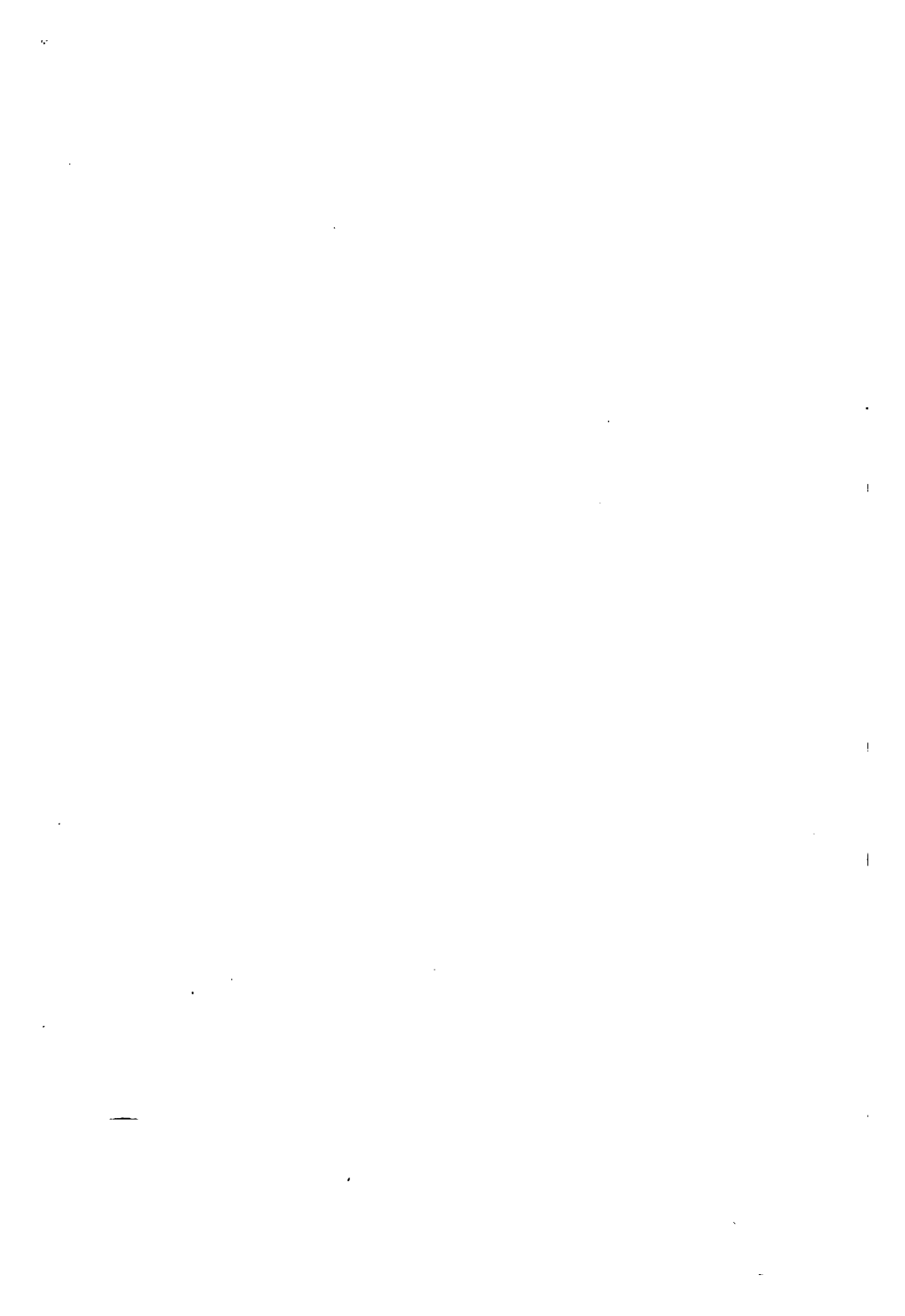
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*σύν μοι πίνε, συνήβα, συνέρα, συστεφανηφόρει,
σύν μοι ματιομένη μάλιστο, σύν σάφρονι σαφρόνει:*

I LIFT THIS VINTAGE OF MY HEART
TO ONE
WHO BLITHELY DRINKS WITH ME,
EACH JOYOUS TOAST SIMONIDES
FLUNG LYRIC REVELLERS SUCH AS WE!

282396

Mr. Edward M. Hyatt 5-28-15g.



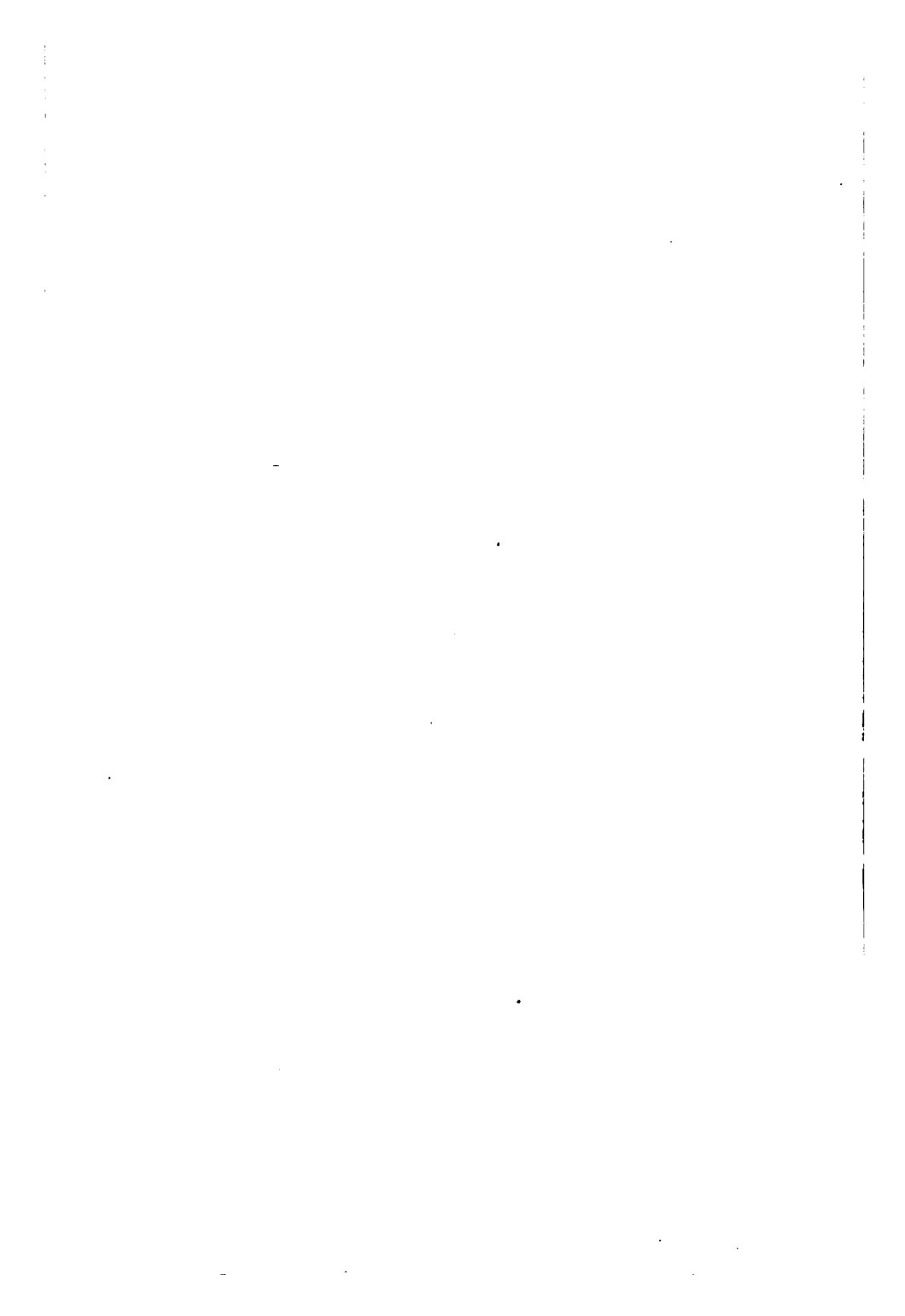
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GABRIELLE



GABRIELLE

“In this chamber Gabrielle de Latour died of joy. Here certainly she had watched at these windows, during ten whole years for the return of her beloved husband from a disastrous battle in the East, until against all expectation she beheld him crossing the court at last.”

From Gaston de Latour.

IN Summers withered long ago,
Ere Ronsard to his Mistress sung —
Mid level corn-fields of la Beauce
Fair Gabrielle was young;
High in her turret chamber lone
Within the old château d'Amour,
Waiting her absent Lover-Lord,
The valiant de Latour.

The faded centuries roll back,
Disclose her at her casement there,
The sunlight on her listless hands
And on her burnished hair;
Close on her lips she holds the past,
Her eyes lit by a vanished face —
Red trees in flower 'neath crimson skies
Hot as their last embrace!

Before her tear-spent vision rides
Her Love — a stern crusader grim

GABRIELLE

Wrapt in a mist of cruel steel,
Her soul set forth with him ;
How can she heed the cushat cry
Or mournful plover voice the rain —
While on her heart departing hoofs
Renew their curt refrain?

Her eyes see not the spires of Chartres
Across the peach bloom of the plain,
To her, through endless leagues of corn
The sickles flash in vain !
Her ears hear neither chime nor dirge,
Nor up the white road's quivering heat
All through her life's long afternoon
Or Knight or Pilgrim feet.

This turret chamber was Love's own,
Here the white rose of Love flared wide,
Here the white Mass of parting said
In silence, side by side —
A thousand secrets fond she knows
To bring her absent Lover near,
A thousand magics to beguile
Incarnate presence here.

No intimacy of the Faith,
No mystic symbol eloquent,
But broods within this perfumed place
His fervid sentiment ;

GABRIELLE

Her heart's perpetual commune
Suffuses colour, sound and sight,
Illumes each portal of the sense
With Love's reflected light.

Above the Christ of her prie-dieu
Her Lover's face shines through her prayer,
O'er milk-white blossoms of the thorn
She loves to garland there.
O dearest sin! O sweet abuse!
One worship with another blent
In rapt idolatry too tense
For Love's relinquishment!

Mid dainty breviaries rare,
Dim tapestries of cloudy bloom,
The songless lute, the silken couch,
Through countless midnight's gloom
She watches day from yesterday,
In pale to-morrow's fruitless lure,
While none beneath the high white stars
Behold her vigils pure.

Religious are her kindred all,
Blazoned their deed's fidelity
In pride sepulchral on their stones,
Devout likewise is she ;
By white resurgent Easter morns,
The scarlet pomps of Whitsuntide,

GABRIELLE

The August fêtes, the purple fasts
Her soul is sanctified.

But when she bows her at High Mass,
Entranced adores the lifted Host,
'Mid crested tombs of de Latour —
He is her Holier Ghost.
Unconscious blasphemy of Love!
The anguish of recovered bliss
Transcends the priestly monotone,
Enshrines her soul in His.

His touch lights torches in her blood,
This groping prayer of sense is His —
This clutch of passion on her throat —
This suffocating kiss —
And dazed she sees the kneeling throng
And on her stifled breast the one
Bright blood drop, ravished bold from some
Rose window by the sun.

For celebrations thus profaned,
No luxury of chastisement
She spares her soft, enamoured flesh,
On grace of heaven intent —
By solemn industries of soul,
By patient ministries of hand,
She plays her rôle of châteleine
Most courteous, most bland.

GABRIELLE

Though Knight and Noble find her fair
None can her Lover's liege beguile,
Nor is there harper's string more sweet
Than accent of her smile,
Dispensing, as her rank befits,
Her Seigneur's largess in his stead,
She welcomes all unto his board,
Her heart a guestless bed.

Ah, well their homage sweeps her by,
Light as a May-bloom careless lain
On the slow-flowing river Eure
That washes her domain;
Within the cloister of her soul
None breaks the reign of revery,
Each drowsy hour a chaplet for
Her ceaseless litany.

The vassalage of Love is hers,
The lowly love of Love afar,
The love of rose for nightingale,
The love of star for star —
And yet despite her heart's duress,
So blest she wears her Seigneur's chain
All Love's requited lovers seem
But meet for her disdain.

Her mouth for wasted pleasure wan,
And famished for her Lover's vow,

GABRIELLE

Her senses to his passion sworn,
His seal upon her brow,
She stretches hands that never reach,
She sees her fires to ashes creep,
The snowflakes wind their pall o'er one
Who sows but may not reap.

The poor come daily for her dole,
And lavish dole she never spares,
But Jesus, merciful, perceives
Her need more sore than theirs
Who speak her thanks with ready tongue,
But judge her heart unpitying —
While on their breasts their babes lie close
As vintage tendrils cling.

Within her incense-laden room
Of sacred intimacies fond,
Amid the relics of themselves,
Of parting and of bond —
Sorrow and Love in her are wed;
Long soothing nights of moonlight dim
Far in the East — or coming near,
She wakes and waits for Him.

Her thoughts are sombre as the rooks
That hover dark o'er tower and sward,
As morning red salutes her cheek,
Sole greeting from her Lord,

GABRIELLE

And though returning harvest fills
The fragrant bins with yellow store,
Still up the glaring, faithless road
Her Joy returns no more!

When Yuletide blazes on the hearth
And minstrels wake the echoes dumb,
From court, from cloister and crusade
Her kinsmen hither come,
The festal flambeaux gaily flare
Upon their Lady's gentle face,
To shudder from the wraith they light
Of spectral shadow grace.

Ten years of pallid Winter days
While nests lie empty neath the eaves,
Ten years of nights of loveless sleep,
Ten years of other's sheaves,
From out her turret casement pent
She sees life ebb and never flow,
Ere Ronsard to his Mistress sung —
Slow centuries ago!

The mystic lilies in the close
Than Gabrielle are not more pale,
Nor fainting moths of early dusk
Than Gabrielle more frail,
When silver nightingales awake
To lyric madness of the Spring,

GABRIELLE

For sad as bud of barren flower
Her hope's false bourgeoning.

The trembling poplars touch the stars
Beyond the crenellated wall,
All night their leaves lie whispering
To vex her in their thrall;
No serenade invites her sleep,
No dawn-song warns of breaking day,
Despair the only troubadour
To guard her postern grey.

The plain beneath its azure dome
Laughs up to heaven, laughs up and sings —
But veiled are her romance-steeped eyes
To blithe external things;
To fecund earth turned by the plough —
The eager jonquil's glad brocade —
And floating odours that arise
From dappled orchard shade.

For while relaxing South winds sigh,
To sobbing April won anew —
Dreams are her waking,— she but dreams
Her days vague visions through;
Fleet as the gentle Nicolette
Speeding to Aucassin amain,
Her fancies coursing down the night
On white feet of the rain.

GABRIELLE

She sees Him slain,— a hero proud,
His shield encasing soul of flame,
His lance the curse of Saracens,
Upon His lips her name —
Or yet she dreams Him false to her,
To wake distracted for her fears
Lest Paradise should lack for Him
Throughout eternal years.

On some soft breast she dreams his head,
His honour pawned to sultry charms,
His oath foresworn, his love betrayed
In slender circling arms;
For eyes of night his foe forgot,
Drunk in the glories of dark hair
Unlike gold cornfields of la Beauce —
Ah, Gabrielle was fair!

Or does Sleep ope with glamoured touch
Her fragile caskets of the past,
And bid the bridegroom to the bride
To break Love's bitter fast,
Not once dead rapture turns to truth
When bugles call the hunt away,
Nor once with her he crosses dawn
To mock the tyrant day.

But sudden piercing through her swoon,
Across the courtyard rings again

GABRIELLE

That mailéd footfall, save in sleep
She harkens for in vain.
Her joy, arch rival of Doleur,
Confronting her with daring eyes,
Sends her blood surging in her ears
As harps of Paradise.

Love, Joy and Death combat for her —
Ere her Seigneur can claim his own,
Her soul's bright star breaks down the sky,
Escapes its orbit lone;
With one high note of ecstasy
The jealous angel Azriel
Sweeps upward,— bearing on his breast
Immortal Gabrielle!

L'Envio

Prince, if my ballad of dead love
Fall o'er you cold as sifting snow
Ere Ronsard to his Mistress sung —
Slow centuries ago,
My own heart kindles envious,
Howe'er the amorous flesh rebel —
To clasp in death Love's endless dream
As Golden Gabrielle.

A WANDERER'S SONG

ONCE more to see familiar stars
Look down through friendly trees —
Once more to feel the heart of youth
With May across the seas!
Once more to see the hyacinth
Press upward through the grass,
To hear the plough-boy's tuneless song
Above the furrow pass.
— In dreams the willows silver along the rising
streams,
In dreams the shining valley puts on her Spring-
tide gleams! —

Once more to breathe the lilac plumes
In gusts of April rain —
To linger with the violets
In a forgotten lane;
Once more to reach the low green stile
Upon whose gentle sod,
Those earlier travellers said farewell —
And fared them forth to God.
— In dreams the May-white trances the nights across
the sea,
In dreams the voice of Springtime is calling, call-
ing me! —

A WANDERER'S SONG

I'd give the dawns of almond bloom,
The orange and the rose —
The misty olive terraces
Of shadowy repose —
I'd give the nightingale and palm
And wander-joys like these —
Just to go back to Spring's old throb
And old infinities.
— In dreams my heart is straying with May across
the seas,
In dreams my heart and May are one in vagrant
ecstacies! —

AUTRE FOIS

'TIS not this April day one sees,
 Beguiled the way of orchard trees
'Neath snows of bloom and starting green —
Oh, not alone this Spring I ween!
Nor this Spring's birds the Lover hears —
But all the birds of other years.

Dimly the senses apprehend —
The amber sunset's fragrant blend
Of buried loves and dear unrest,
That linger in the blossomed West —
As ecstasy of Mays long flown
To lyric heavens of their own.

Yet, heart of Nature's mystery!
Within each budding prophecy,
Each songful miracle of dawn —
Faint Springs for ever passed and gone
Look back at us with April eyes,
From memory's green paradise.

GIPSYING

YOUR spirit makes a wanderer of mine!
I cannot choose but leave my hearth and go—
I care not where nor how—
If but on hill or sky you shine,
At pleasure of the gipsy wind
Like to the whirling leaves I blow!
I cannot choose but catch your hand and go.

The tenderness of yesterday from me
Is gone,—the poppy drugs of passion go,
And duties that were dear;
I feel a tidal ecstasy,
The savage in me calls—I hear
My mate where e'er deep waters flow—
I cannot choose but listen till I go.

In green gold glammers of the early Spring
The daffodils are dancing,—I must go!
In madrigals of flight
The sea gull in me now takes wing,
The morning madness blurs my sight,
And when your pagan pipe you blow—
I lock my life awhile, escape and go!

THE WIND

HE sought me by the river bank and on the mountainside,

From tallest pines he swept the miles of frozen country wide;

He would not whirl with merry storms or rock in empty nests,

Or hide in drowsy woods till dawn — his troth to human quests.

He spurned the city's narrow streets and climbed a sunless wall

To lay his heart of solitude against my window small.

O rugged comrade bleak and true! — no blandishment is thine,

Yet to far heights of distant blue thy spirit summons mine.

I hear thy finger at the pane, thy voice entreating me —

A snow-thatched village 'neath the stars my eyes bewildered see;

My heart is answer to thy call — now let us blow and roam

Above the city, down the world and up the hills of home!

ZAUBER-DUFT

WHAT heart but fears a fragrance?
Alien they
Who breathe in the white lilac only May;
For there be other spirits unto whom
Fate's kiss lies dreaming in each stray perfume!

Who mock at ghosts of odour — poor they be!
Bereft the scented balms of memory,
For unto one in April's rain-blest earth
There starts for aye the sharp, glad cry of birth;
And Love will find in rooms unbarred for years
Familiar sweetness loosing sudden tears,
Clasping the will in mastering embrace
As in the presence of a phantom grace.

Then there be odours pungent — fires in Fall
The gipsying of boyhood to recall;
And there be perfumes holy — nay, but one
Whose pang is like none other 'neath the sun
To drown the sinking senses in a joy
Beyond all time to weaken or destroy!
Odours there be that swoon, entreat, caress —
Elusive thrall, to doom or stab or bless;
Each vagrant scent that holds the breath in fee
Doth wed the heart in Life's eternity.

ZAUBER-DUFT

Who fear no wraiths of fragrance — sorry they;
Who breathe in lilac odours only May;
For there be other mortals unto whom
White magic wanders in each stray perfume.

A SONG OF SUMMER

COME Amaryllis, Phyllis fair —
Chloe and Daphnis fine,
Come Strephon and come Corydon —
Let a smooth reed be thine!
Come nymphs and fauns and satyrs shy,
And revel high with me —
For Summer's at her carnival
And bids us forth to see!

Along the filmy woodland ways
Pan did so recent pass,
He left the forest trembling yet,
Laid glammers on the grass,
There's wild magic in the measure
The tricky shadows dance,
There's a lure in every dingle —
A hint of dalliance.

Come shepherds, leave your bleating charge
And follow at our call,
Out-fleet the stream's soft winding course
In liege to Summer's thrall;
With madrigal and triolet,
With reed and pipe and song —
With rigaudon and phantasy
Dance on in happy throng!

A SONG OF SUMMER

Come deck your bodice shepherdess
With aretheusa pale,
And wind your locks with eglantine —
Let ecstasy prevail!
With jonquil and with violet,
Narcissus, fleur de lis —
Be garlanded each reveller
Who follows Pan with me!

Come, crush the fern with careless feet
And wide all durance fling,
Youth fleeter is than hoofs of Pan,
And Summer's on the wing;
Love, mirth and joyance claim the hour
In fragrant roundelay —
For Summer holds high carnival
And Pan has passed this way!

A SUMMER LETTER

DEAR Absent Wanderer, think of me
As one well lost; content to be
} Lost down a Summer afternoon,
Beyond the call of swift or soon!

Deep down a heavy dream of song —
Haunting the hush in cadence strong,
With heart-heard voices of the Spring,
Along the silence echoing.

Deep down a sultry glamoured glade,
Where musky chestnut trees pervade
With far, forgetful sorcery —
From out their white veil's mystery.

Lost down a Summer afternoon
Beyond the call of swift or soon,
With Hollyhocks to point the way —
Dear Absent, look for me to-day!

Tranced in a daze of shadow green,
Whose dusk desires embrace and lean
With hastening step, each hour increased,
Forever homeward to the east.

A SUMMER LETTER

One with the breathless beauty-gloom,
Or the light pleasure of the breeze,
One with the sloth of sated bees,
Faint in the hot decay of bloom.

Through all the listless leisure sought
By no stray crier save thy thought —
Beyond the call of swift or soon,
Lost down a Summer afternoon!

MIDSUMMER NOON

MIDSUMMER noon!
For one brief hour Pan sleeps —
And Nature marvelling at the god's release
Stands breathless o'er her shaggy deity,
Lest aught dispel the beauty of his dream.
Pan sleeps —

Let shadows veil the fervent sun
And butterflies on honeyed bosoms swoon;
Let bees in nectars deep their voices drown,
Nor cry of colour break upon the hush;
The fiercer blooms shall calm their fevered blood,
Nor falling petal stir the dusky wood,
And birds drop songless on the grassy shade —
That only lulling cadences prevail.
Pan sleeps —

In splendid stupors burns the noon;
The fountain to her lilies murmurs on —
Finger on lip doth Nature boding lean
Unto the leafy covert, where at ease
Lies lapped in silence the immortal faun.
Let every tender avocation cease!

Save running water that shall mystic ward
From evil potencies; — pause laughing breeze,

MIDSUMMER NOON

Nor tease the forest heart at your caprice —
Nor set the harebells ringing as you pass,
Till Pan awakes —

Lifts from the crumpled fern
His tangled locks and pipes the sylvan strain
That calls the shepherd to his errant flocks,
The wilful goatherd from his mistress' arms,
And bids each pastoral energy resume
Its August ripening, its chaunt of growth.
Upon repose no longer waits the noon!
Resume ye forest winds! Ye hastening streams,
Ye fleecy flocks and birds and scented blooms!
Fountains and mortals.— All,— your songs resume!
Pan wakes —

Again through glade and everglade,
Through sacred grove and open pasturage,
His fluting reed pipes winsome to his own
Till echo harkens for his wandering tune.

MIDSUMMER WAVES

WE are turned back to the shore in blue legions —
Here to sing canticles sparkling and praiseful.
Here to exult and exalt for a season.
Sea leagues on sea leagues,—from caves of the
coral —

Turning from vastness and bearing strange monsters,
Our shambling caravans come with their burdens —
Pebbles and shells dear to infantile mortals.

Here we sing canticles joyous and mirthful —
Voices grown hoarse 'mid the pitiless surges,
Spirits bowed down to your sands by sore labours;
Ridden by hurricanes rending asunder,
Hurling us on to their dooms of destruction,
Winding their wrecks in reverberant breakers.
Dwelling in space where the stars rock above us,
We have held dawn on our undulant bosom;
Ours are the deep things,—the sea graves un-
numbered.

We are turned back to the shore for a season,
Haunting your ears with the dirge of mid-ocean,
We are the myriad vassals of danger,
We are the derelict's pilot and lover;
Desperate mariners sigh in our choirs —
Mariners swept from the shrouds down our spirals;
We have seen ships steer our course and go under —

MIDSUMMER WAVES

Ours are the songs of the ocean's pale sirens.
We are turned back to the shore for a season,
Here to allure by our sinuous splendour.
We chant the groves drownèd deep 'neath our azure ;
Gardens of wonder un-trod of the living,
Passionless Edens eternally flowing —
Cold scentless blossoms that live in our being ;
Neither the sun nor the moon e'er descending
Green fathoms down where our sea-beauties tremble,
Veiled in rare seaweeds and lit of the sea-gleam,—
Vertical sea-gleam across moving waters.

We are turned back in the languors of August,
Cheering the weak by our chorals courageous.
Cut into foam where the jealous crags stay us,
We are the homeless, the desolate wand'ers,
We who lift Midsummer canticles thunderous —
Restless and wind-worn, possessed of vague demons,
Peace is for us now and ever receding,
Hid in the hollow of His hand that poured us
Forth from tumultuous whirlwind and chaos ;
Jubilant witness of mighty Jehovah!

THE SPIDER'S WEB

BETWEEN the harebell and the grass
At Summer dawn it hung,
The dew lay like a spangled kiss,
So palpitant it swung:
A film of glamour frosted o'er,
Rainbowed by passing cloud—
As breath of God upon the morn,
But destined for a shroud.

His fairy canopy out-spread,
The artisan withdrew;
Although a priest of beauty's cult
He spun a lure, he knew.
The spider loves his loomless web
As poet loves his art,
He wove that shining thing for death,
A murderer at heart!

.
Between the harebell and the grass
At Summer eve it swung,
A diagram of fatal charm
With gauzy victims hung!

THE RETURN

BACK to the farm!
Where the Bob White still is calling
As in remembered dawns when youth and I were
boys,
Driving the cattle where the meadow brook is brawling
Her immemorial wandering fears and joys!

Home to the farm for the deep green calms of
Summer,
Life of the open furrow—life of the waving
grain—
Leaving the painted world of masquerade and mummer
Just for the sense of earth and ripening again!

Down in the hayfield where scythes glint through
the clover;
Lusty blood a-throbbing in the splendour of the
noon—
Lying mid the haycocks as castling clouds pass over,
Hearing insect lovers a-piping out of tune.

Caught in the spell of old kitchen garden savours—
In luscious lines retreating to slopes of musky corn

THE RETURN

And clambouring grapes that spill their clustering
flavours,—

Each in fragrant season filling plenty's golden horn.

Off to the wood lot where briar bloom runs riot
And wary forest creature no hunter's snare de-
ceives,

Where virgin growth beguiles the solemn-hearted
quiet

With songs of Winter fires a-ripple through the
leaves.

Up to the bars in the twilight's soft reaction —

Winding through the ferny lanes to barns of stoop-
ing eaves

Welcoming at nightfall to simple satisfaction,

When the reeling swallow her dusky pattern
weaves.

Out in the dews with the spider at his shuttle —

In that half dreaming hour that awakes the whip-
poorwill

And sets the night hawk darting sinister and subtle,

E'er the full moon complacent loiters o'er the hill.

Back to the farm!

With the friendly brute for neighbour,

Where youth and Nature beckon, the tryst who would
not keep?

Back to the luxury of rest that follows labour,

Back to the primal joys of hunger and of sleep!

TO A MOUNTAIN LAKE

O LAKE within thy clasping hills,
E'en so a woman shadows forth her Love!
Fond to reflect each ecstasy that fills
The hours of gold; or bows that arch above
The waning tempest, to the calm that stills.

Oft hast thou trembled, swift o'er swept
By gusts of passion whirling over thee;
Into thy heart regretful rains have swept;
Thy leaden greyness or thy phantasy
Thy sky-born impress of thy Lover kept!

And most I love thee, when at rest,
All through the starry vigils of the night
Thou bearest the young moon upon thy breast,
Cradled in broken ripples of delight.

WAITING FOR THE STAGE

THE evening wind is waking in the Elms,
Unto the whippoorwill the thrush gives o'er,
The hooded roads from twilight long withdrawn
Back to their dim communing turn once more.

Players at quoits forsake the dusty road
And drift to haven at the village store,
On whose worn steps an idler carves his name
'Mid interlaced initials cut of yore.

Nor flock nor kine bespeak an evening care,
The labourer may let his vigils fall
And take his ease mid gallant sparks a while—
So well the hour makes consorts of them all.

Here, while the farmer talks of future crops,
Predicts a drought or drones of early blight,—
Some country bumpkin airs his prowess bold,
Or some pugnacious bully offers fight;

The schoolmaster oft cracks his fabled joke,
On vying with the local wit intent,—
And fitting past as moths,— the village maids,
Bashful by nature and admonishment.

WAITING FOR THE STAGE

Oft doth a hillside neighbour, drawing rein
For trifling barter, glib a wager lay
Twixt yon grey Dobbin and his "Three-year-old";
A hurried child forgets his jug to stay.

Nor venerable sage nor swain new-wed,
However may his rustic ardour burn,—
However fond besought to hasten home,
Once lingering, effect a swift return.

Both church and state an ample rostrum find,
No party ever lacks for advocate,
Nor gentle gossip loses savour rare,
Exchanged by weary cronies as they wait.

Ah! theirs a ripe though rude philosophy —
Nor fear nor avarice mar their content,
Who seeking nothing, find the joy they crave,
Impartial waiting on the near event.

How jovial the hour that tops their day!
What jests are made, what memories restored,
What hot discussions waged, what tales retold,
What shrewd surmise and mysteries explored!

Now from the cottage eaves a fainting beam
Sends forth a final sleep-inviting sign,
As from the belfry of the meeting house,
Tolls ominous the warning hour of nine.

WAITING FOR THE STAGE

Soon, with a jolting swagger o'er the stones,
The distant sound of wheels their charm repeat,
And o'er the hilltop looms the stage at last!
To rattle reckless down the silent street —

Draw up a flourish in the square of light
Framed by the open door,— the whip lash curled
Once more across the leader's reeking flanks,
To herald wide this envoy from the World!

Since boyhood days I've seen the liners brave
Plough up the Bay at home,— across the sands
Spent caravans wind in at close of day;
Received strange convoys oft in lonely lands;

Yet never have I felt the World draw near,
Its great uncertainties my fate engage,
As when there lumbered sudden through the dusk
That peradventure of the evening stage!

AT SUMMER'S END

OF old the Summer crept on noiseless wing,
As if by stealth toward Autumn turned her face,
This year she makes no secret of her haste —
Speeds her successive pageantry apace.

Glad years when at October's fruitful stile
Your feet to meet my own were turning true,
How bloom and tedious vintage held me back
From days of golden reaping, love and you!

But now — when parting only waits us there,
Both hasting bird and changeful flower conspire
To speed us to the jocund harvest moon
Of old out-lived but not out-loved desire.

Too swift the briar rose gave o'er,— too soon,
Too soon the ripening grape upon the vine!
Scarce did the lily star the sultry pool
When roadsides purpled with the aster's sign.

Turn back, repent your steps of radiant bloom,
Your green assemblage turn! Give back those slow
Interminable days of Summers past,
When hope, remote but sure, had far to go!

AT SUMMER'S END

Too brief across the sun dial leans the sun,
The lispig birds are prescient of their flight
Ere scarce, it seems, they tumbled from the nest;
And bolder dares the cricket taunt the night.

Each laggard of old Summers spurs us on —
Too early creeps the dusk, the shortening days
Wane paler toward the fateful hour, for hearts
Whose beat is doomed at parting of the ways.

IN AUTUMN RAIN

WHAT spirit is it calling in the Autumn rain,
That bids me cast my needle by, set wide the
door?

The day is troubled with its voice and on the path
The footfall of the dead that come no more.

To reminiscent languors now the gardens yield,
In Spring they ardent press — in Fall resigned they
know

They have fulfilled the fate of Summer — now to sleep
Beneath the lullaby of winds that strow
The drifting yellow leaves from unresisting trees,
To weave in mellow strands along the lane and street
Vague Moorish patterns of forgotten suns and rains,
A golden tapestry for Autumn's feet.

Well hath the Spring a throbbing fever of her own,
Waking and breaking from reluctant thralls in vain,
Since all her prophecy at last is lulled to peace
In Nature's sure narcotic, Autumn rain.

O guest beloved of my heart and wailing wind,
For you I light the hearth, entreat your will its way,
Pile high the cones and hesitate — perchance
That haunting spirit o'er my sill should stray!

IN AUTUMN RAIN

Let us elude to-night the intervening drear,
While in the leaping flame hope's drooping pinions
thrill,
Until as Southing birds we cry, " 'Tis but a sleep,
Ere April call us by the daffodil! "

THE DEAD HUNTER

ALL through the Summer days I tranquil lay,
Filled to the lips with utter peace and rest —
The warm, sweet, slumberous breezes did not stir
The stark hands folded weary on my breast ;
All through the Summer nights I loved to dream,
While moonlight wove a ghost-lore on my grass,
Nor longed for dawn nor any restless change —
Nor that this trance of Summer death should pass.

But now the Autumn stands with lifted horn
To call the hunter and the wild things all,
My satin ceiling cramps me,— I would forth !
Were there a door set in my narrow wall.
O Nature, free this prisoned child of thine !
Rest irksome grows and heaven from earth too far —
Bid me come back to wander in the rain,
Or shine at nightfall in the first faint star !

Call me to mingle with the valley mists
That cling about the hills when harvest wanes,
Or lie in sunshine 'neath old cottage eaves,
Or shine in cresting cornfields on the plains ;
Let me sing seaward in the rising streams,
Fumble my wonted latch in wistful wind —

THE DEAD HUNTER

Let me arise in colour's leaping flame,
Or brief renewal in the gentian find!

Help me elude this guarding monument
That prates my peace in eulogistic strain,
When Autumn sounds her scarlet reveille
The hunter's heart harks back to life again!

NOVEMBER DUSK

UPON a ridge of distant pasture height
Merged in the symphony of coming night,
'Mid chords and multichords of muffling haze,
Through furze and gorse the darkness deeper wades
O'er dim receding glades and everglades,
Whose outlines faint elude the wistful gaze.

In sylvan dreams the forest Lovers lie,
Only a wraith of smoke against the sky
Hints of the valley's humble cottage cheer,
A baying hound — a child's voice sweet and shrill;
As tides of ocean flooding up the hill
The wines of sleep and purple stupors near.

Cut off from day's realities — the past
Blurred by soft opiates of dusk — at last
Intimate darkness fills our empty palms!
Those groping hands that seek and dare not claim.
Nirvana's peace prevails; the mounting flame
Of Self bowed 'neath the Angelus of calms.

Till sudden o'er us breaks a cry of flight —
The train! The train!
And passioning cities within reach to-night!

IN JANUARY

A CROSS the night, sifting through gaunt pine
branches,
Peering for lovers, youth, old Junes, o'er soon —
Down icy paths, past rose-beds deep in snowdrift
Over the sleeping garden strays the moon.

The lilies do not heed the silver signal,
Nor do the roses breathe back bliss for bliss,
And yet no mourner at a sweetheart's graveside,
Nor lover at a lady's casement this.

The silence deepens; to its chosen altars
The light in wonder as a spell descends,
No husky fountain lifts a sweet rejoinder —
Nor bloom nor fragrance on this step attends.

Faint buds of Spring lie 'neath their dazzling hillocks,
Deep dreaming of young April's crescent frail;
Nor moth nor firefly ply their amorous traffic
Nought wakes within this frozen vigil pale.

Aye there is one,— that soft her prey is stalking,
Stealthy as Zero's kiss upon the pane —
Through her set teeth the hungry wind is sighing,
Nor doth she follow on the moon in vain.

IN JANUARY

'Tis the white Were-wolf shambles through the
shadow,

Follows the moon with Ætna in her eyes;
Now "in the wolf's month" down the night deserted,
Only brute and planet share the earth and skies.

REVOLT

SHE turned from her hearth and its fires forsaking
Fled wild to Nature — a mortal escaping!
To lose human passion, her hot heart freeing —
With Wind and River to merge her being.

○ Wind I am come! ○ circling Water!
A loveless Pagan, behold your daughter!
My lips are weary of languorous kisses,
My shoulders are burdened by arms that cling,
The fetters of Love are irksome blisses —
I weep and tremble when I would sing!

Let me race high with your gusty huntsmen
Coursing tall tree-tops the long night through;
Let me dance glad with the clamorous torrent,
Veiled in the mists of her rainbow dew!
My outstretched arms,— you will never bind them!
My wandering feet you will never snare!
My heart you will never freight with sorrow —
My eyes you will never dim with care.

○ Wind I am come! ○ circling Water!
○ Pagan Mother, receive your daughter!
My eyes are holden by mortal weeping,
And my heart rebels at its own desire;
My dreams are thrall to a Lover's keeping —
My life consumes in a wasting fire!

REVOLT

But the Winds blew Northward and did not heed her,
Hallowing hard on the track of the leader —
The Torrent sped on to its flooding river,
Mocking aloud through shine and shiver —

“ Turn back! Turn back from this shrineless portal!
Nature is fair but Love is immortal!
The sky has its stars and gods above you,
The blossom must bloom and the bird must
fly —
You may not venture with Wind and Water,
Turn home sad mortal, with Love to lie! ”

THE POET'S INTERLUDE

Nature is sibylline, timeless and heartless,
Her hand lies hard as a primal law,
Though immemorial beings entreat her,
Her suns appear and her moons withdraw.

The prescience of Autumn, the April's trouble,
Vanishing fragrance, wings that hover —
What are they more than illumined transcription,
Varying mood of a mortal Lover?

REVOLT

Love is the longing of purple shadow,
Love is the glamour of golden grain,
Love is the might of the trampling tempest,
Love is the call of the wander-rain!

Though you fain rebel and elude with Nature,
In vain her sorceries 'reft of this,
Her luring wild and her wantoning joyance
Fade at the brink of a mortal kiss.

Crimson of coppice and russet of dingle
Falter or flame by Love's furtive grace,
Dreamless the stile in the silvering moonbeam
Till Love's light crossing to Love's embrace.

Love is the instinct of brooding nightfall,
Love is where Westering wood-paths lead,
Love is the star on the flushed horizon
Thrilling the sense with a mystic need!

Nature is magical, wayward, elusive —
Her goals set far beyond man's scant hour,
But the human touch to the wistful human
Transcends the mark of her fateful power.

What beauty lurks in her smile to challenge
The curving lips for Love's wine out-thrust?
Drink and forget in the cup of your Lover —
Human to human as dust to dust!

REVOLT

Then the Wind shouted high, " I ride forever !"
The Stream replied, " I run to my river !"
" Impotent arms you will open — to stay us —
Our rapture shall never tarry or bide,
Sleep if you will in our loveless chambers —
Of sweet-mouthed mortals your dreams
betide !"

She fled the forest — her deft feet escaping
Turned to her hearthstone, her folly forsaking ;
To claim the immortal, her passion freeing —
In the cup of her Lover to lose her being ;
Her lips turned faint for his languorous kisses,
Her slight arms fain for his arms that cling,
Her hands outstretched to claim her fetters —
To weep and tremble nor care to sing.

TO-NIGHT

“SOMETIME — but not to-night — sometime,”
My heart as roses bowed by rain
At cadence of that slow refrain,
That tremulous, impassioned rhyme,
“Sometime — dear Love, sometime.”

To-night, dear doubt of Love, to-night!
Aye, garnered roses fade, I know —
Yet those ungarnered bloom and go
Pale and forgotten from thy sight,
To-night — dear doubt of Love, to-night!

“Sometime — dear joy of Love — sometime”
Thine eyes that kiss my soul to-night
With spirit kisses, hot and white,
Will close to love, be blind to rhyme —
“Sometime — dear joy of Love, sometime.”

To-night — O Love we have to-night!
Make sure the lock of heaven's gate
Within thine arms, ere 'tis too late!
Love may a rover be at light —
To-night, dear dream of Love, to-night!

CHILD OF EARTH

MY father was an Anchorite
His soul to me he gave;
My mother was a Zingara,
Light as the dancing wave.

The mystic vision starward turned — my father's
legacy;
The scarlet passion's vagrant lure — my mother calling
free.

Within my cell I hear her song;
Within my lover's arms
I hear the prayers my father said
To ward from evil charms.
My father's voice cuts through the dark and lights a
pathway home;
My mother's laugh rings down the world, and hearing,
— I must roam.

Poor haunted mortal, thus to be
Possessed of natures twain —
A gipsy heart, a monkish soul,
In conflict hot and vain!
My father's lineage was proud; stern Duty was his
name.
My mother men called Pleasure; — none cared from
whom she came!

IN FAREWELL

WHITE is my colour,
Think of me
'Mid snows of Winter; unto thee
The faint white lilacs breathe me yet,
The white rose and white violet
Forbid thy senses to forget!

White is my colour,
May it be
A pledge of nearness unto thee!
When the white falcon seeks thy wrist,
When thy white charger wins the list;
Aye, and when on thy bended knee
The sacrament hath shriven thee,
Say one white, silent prayer for me!

HIS APPEAL

GIVE me your weariest hours
When the tides of life ebb low,
Give me the hopeless moments
When the light seems near to go.

Come to me in temptation —
Ah, never I bid you, Sweet,
When life is glad or glorious
And the roses kiss your feet!

Others may drink of your triumphs
And garner your laurels green,
Mine be the love enfolding
In weakness and pain unseen.

Why should you feign to spare me
With your smile that cheats the years —
When my heart finds all its heaven
In the shadow of your tears?

AT LAST

KISS down my eyes —
 lest they should wake
Upon the vine shade of my village wall;
Lest as in parted dawns the slow day break,
And heartless pleasures, weary duties call!

Kiss down my eyes —
 lest far from thee
Along some luring, unsuspected way,
A new delight or glory-flash I see,
This one impassioned blindness to betray.

Then cease to kiss —
 that I my eyes
May raise to thine and know the past is past;
Beyond the tyranny of waking lies
Our love's far dreamland-kingdom — won at last!

OUR SECRET

YOUR voice, to me is like the fountain fall
In some sequestered courtyard, overhid
With flowers of pomegranates burning red —
Where rhythmic waters ceaseless calm and call.

Your glance, to me is like a restless star —
The instant ere it stakes its light on space,
To reel as some wild centaur from its place,
Past steadfast orbs enchained to heaven's car.

To me, your touch — ah, no, to all save me
Let that remain beneath pomegranates red —
In that dim courtyard with the fountain hid,
A listless languor of the memory!

MIGNONETTE

WHEN I am dead —
My heart turned back to dust,
All that was dear to you in me will rise
Forever in the mignonette we loved;
When I am dead — beyond the Spring's surprise.

When wistful suns
Ravish this fragrant bloom
With one gold throe of sensuous ecstasy,
As light that shivers deep 'neath moving waves
Something in you will stir, for sake of me,—

And though my heart be dust, my soul will smile,
And you will sigh for Paradise the while.
Would I were dead!

THE SONG OF A SLAVE TO HER MASTER

WITHIN the courtyard, Master mine,
Give me one little fountain glad,
To be for Joy when I repine —
The sister that I never had;

To play with me when you are far —
To chatter in my native tongue —
Yours is a high and distant star,
Dear Master, I am young!

One little fountain ever gay,
To sing the song of vanished birds,
To break the silence of the day
When you forget to love in words.

ONE DAY

HE taught her a whole world of needs
In one short day;
As one man to one woman may —
A need of daring and of deeds,
A need of crowns to lay beneath
His hero feet.
A need of tender fragrance sweet,
And fame to offer as a wreath;
Of joy all overpowering,—
Of pain, to prove
Enduring masteries of love.
A need of higher notes to sing,
A need of heaven and of truth;
Strong hands to guide,
And braver footsteps by her side
Across the day — aye and forsooth
A need of covert for her weary wings —
The need one man unto one woman brings.

A LAST FAVOUR

SPEAK lower — do not wake
This hurrying heart of mine
That ailed the livelong day,
And listening tense for thine,
Remembered scarce to beat!
Step ghostlier — do not stir
Forgotten miseries
Come thou no nearer her.

Still, and appeased at last,
By every sign she sleeps —
Forsaken of desire.
Alas, the slumbering deeps
Will tremble 'neath thy voice —
Thy faintest whispering break
Her calm's frail barrier.
Ah, go! she shall not wake!

A SONG OF AFTERWARD

I SLEW her heart with kisses
And tossed her soul away —
I balmed her sleep in blisses,
Lest dreams from love betray ;
I wound her in a shroud of song
Lest pain her path forget —
And all the empty hours along,
With snares of fragrance set.

Her ghost rose Queen of kisses
To haunt my life away —
Throughout all newer blisses
Her phantom doth betray ;
And now I make her dirge in deeds
Of other women's wrong,
Nor angels heed what anguish bleeds
In the blasphemers' song !

THE CONVICTS

THUS spake an artist, riding idly where
A chain gang breaking stones upon the road,
Compelled his heart from comrades brave and fair
To closer study of the penal code:
"Your brow is sullen and your life a curse,
From sin ye came and innate evil bear,—
But, brother, I who ride and laugh, do worse
Than you who toil in open sentence there!
I drag a chain self-forged; nay, 'tis no jest,
Yonder she waits,— the wife, whose silken pace
Dwarfs my man's stride to crawl at her behest,
While mated weaklings pass me in the race."

AN INCIDENT

AS twilight lay upon the sea,
A sombre priest once strayed
Where idle groups of worldlings throng
In vanity's parade.

And when his habit faint across
My lady's velvet swept,
A flash of longing for the world
Across his conscience crept.

My lady's glance fell on his face,
Bent prayerful o'er his book —
A flash of envy for his peace
Her inmost being shook.

Both went their way all unaware
Of what had each befell —
Within his soul a stray desire,
Within her heart a cell!

AN ALLEGORY

ABOVE — the Eiger rose in clouds of snow,
The death gorge of the ice crevasse below;
Aware of crumbling terror 'neath his feet,
He staggered back,—miraculous retreat —
Safe, on the rugged rocks of certainty!
Then in a swift reactive bravery,
He faltered near — one flower allured so fair
That clung beneath the ledge in dizzy air,
One crimson flower blooming amid the frost —
And seeing her, he tottered, and was lost.

Unmoved, the Eiger pointed to the sky,
Below the silent glacier gave no sigh;
The sweet and evil flower bloomed on; afar
Hell burned the brighter for a fallen star!

ANY MAN TO ANY WOMAN

WHAT will you make of me?
A lawless Lover.

True to the blood that runs in errant veins?
Another Antony betraying kingdoms?
An Abelard, whose crimson passion stains
A sacred vow? Or yet the flawless hero,
As Parsifal eluding Venus' arms —
Visioned beyond men's lower satisfactions?
Some Petrarch singing whitely of your charms?

We are a little lower than the angels,
But hid within us all the gods abide,
For you the sword is drawn, for you dishonoured,
Faithful or faithless you at last decide.
You are the Circe of our every power,
You are the fire alike to blood and brain,
Call us, Oh, Heart of Woman! Call your bond-men!
When have your signals flashed to us in vain?

ANY WOMAN TO ANY MAN

WHAT will you make of me?

A shining Helen

Lit by Troy's blazing towers? Some pale Camille

Dead of vain love? Or does the phantom Laura

Unto your lyric phantasy appeal?

Would you but seek me for a pretty pastime,

To dance the hours away in pleasure's lead?

Or does a nobler vision claim your worship —

Mother of Men thrill your diviner need?

Faint lies our star beneath the far horizon,

Until you curse or bless it into flame,

Empress or Angel, Magdalen, Madonna

Await your christening voice of pride or shame.

Call us to kingdoms, martyrdom or passion,

We are the answer to your inmost prayer —

There are no depths for you we have not fallen,

There are no heavens too high for us to share!

THROUGH THE IVORY GATE

“THERE are two gates of dream—the Ivory Gate is that through which unrealized visions pass.”

I

IN A MOON-COLOURED GARDEN

WHY do you stand where the Virgin lilies
Lift their souls upon midnight space?
What is the spell of their moon-lit silence?
A face — only a face.

Why do you shiver where crimson roses
Yield their hearts in the noontide glow?
Theirs is the sign betwixt love and slumber
On lips I used to know.

Why do you wait in the bronze-green twilight
When restless-footed dancers pair?
I wait for my dream with the dark returning —
A heaven of dusky hair.

II

A DREAM OF FIRST APPEARING

ALL night I wandered down a way
Familiar to old dreams,—yet vague estranged
Through dread of where that sloping path might lead.
The trees arched friendly, waters sang unchanged
Till currents widened and my trouble grew —
The light seemed spent, the shadow closer fell,
There was no bridge to span the rising flood,
No hand outstretched to break the pallid spell:
And then,—for I had passed that way before
In dreams, my fate I guessed; but not till You
Stood with averted face and did not speak,
Perceived the shallow horror was not true!

III

WHISPERED BETWEEN DREAMS

MY little Love — should you slip from my side
and die,

Your soul I know would rise to bless the Summer
night,

A timid star,— too far from me! Too high!
And I, through unkissed hours should scan the heav-
ens bright

Until I found you by your shivering light,

Aware my passion even from your sky.

Remote and comfortless that far gold spirit sign —
Dream close, lest God allure you from these arms of
mine!

IV

CHANSONETTE D'UN RÊVE

WAKEFUL our love-haunted garden sweet,
(What have you done to my dreams, Petite?)
Wistful the breath of the mignonette,
(Dreams that remember when days forget?)

The silence grows and the night is sweet,
(What have you breathed through my dreams, Petite?)
The amorous moonlight slumbers deep,
(O the wild bird calling through my sleep!)

The dew lies glad on our garden sweet,
(What have you dared in my dreams, Petite?)
The moth is come to the heliotrope,
(So might a kiss through the darkness grope!)

V

OPIUM

I AM that one in whom worn hearts forget
Their wasteful wage of sin-earned misery ;
Dear Circe of the sinful, I am she
Whose face with tears of rueful men is wet !

My voice is slow with murmur of the sea,
My breast like green seduction of her graves —
I bear the fevered heart, as on her waves,
Until they drown beneath all memory.

I have no creed of life or loyalty,
I have no joy of daring, or disdain
Of perfidy ; mine are the weary slain ;
The fallen, as to love, turn back to me.

In my betrayal certain madness lies,
Of my desertion Emperors have died ;
My soft embrace no bliss may safe deride,
For I am she no man may dare despise.

My hair is stupor ; languor-shaded deep
My eyes, and dark with unsearched mystery ;
Men find Nirvana's prophecy in me,
I am the timeless courtesan of Sleep !

VI

ROSEMARY

A DREAMING of past lovers
For half the night she lay,
Some dead since many Summers,
Some half the world away.
Grey eyes and brown once fervent
Sank deep into her own,
For tears and futile longing
So dim and wistful grown.

Young lips smiled old caresses
As youth came back again,
Unto their lure she yielded —
Incredulous and fain;
Yet none did chide the faithless
For lips and eyes astray
From troth so weary guarded
Throughout the faithful day.

No jealous law withheld them,
When nearness snatched their breath
To merge their listless being
In waking — or in death;
But one faint face eluded,
The old mad, vanished way —
And weeping for remembrance
For half the night she lay!

VII

ATTAINED!

THIS is no dream!
For when in dreaming
Love counterfeits the raptured sense,
The sacrament of Spirit fails me
In premonitions of suspense.

This is no dream!
Or from such dreaming,
The sun would wake me, or the rain
Upon my heart — as tears faint falling —
Re-bind the daybreak's silver chain.

This is no dream!
Nor dream of dreaming,
This mystic flight of soul with soul —
Starward, yet passionately mortal,
Unquenched desire our flaming goal!

VIII

A FAREWELL

TELL one bead of the rosary at morn for me,
And go your way —
No envy shall I know of hearts you win, regret,
betray —
Remember me, white Spirit, when you pray,
And from afar, as star to star might lean —
Disdained the brief triumphant heard and seen!
In sleep's clairvoyant reverie dream back to me,
Across the night —
Let your voice calling from the inmost realms of
Dream-land bright —
Renew elusive echoes of delight!
Pity alone were mine, if granted this,
For those who touch your hand or breathe your kiss.

IX

A LOVER'S SONG

I LIKE a May night best to lie a'waking —
And Summer moons to dream of hasting bliss,
The Autumn darks for love's supreme surrender,
Winter for sleep, please God, forgetting this!

Waking or sleeping, loving, aye or dreaming —
Life speed the joy that doth all pain beget!
What had the year of lure or hope or terror —
Robbed of the kiss whose shadow is regret?

X

TO SLEEP

“Perchance to dream.”

O SLEEP, come not as you have come
Through all the feverish years,
Rouse not those phantoms of desire
That waken us in tears!
When that long night of endless dark fit us for
Paradise,
Forbid Life play her drama o'er beneath our passive
eyes!

First childhood, dreaming deep of toys
The daybreak steals away,
The Lover hidden with his bliss —
Turned wistful back to day;
The parted Passionate that meet to almost win em-
brace,
Before the waking treachery dissolves in pensive grace.

Then sadder dreams,— where those long lost
Faint through our slumbers roam —
In silent marvel at our joy
In seeing them turned home;

TO SLEEP

So real, one follows after sleep their presence to recall;
So false, that all day long their shadows cast a mystic
pall.

In those first visions of the night,
Whose dreams were augury
To Sibyl and to Seer of old,
What strange revealings be!
What retributions wait us there! Was it our natal
star
That cursed our rest with haggard fears and limned
us as we are?

O Sleep, come not as you have come,
With dreams so mocking sweet,
Or so distraught that madness lies
The way your paths entreat —
To ours who 'neath the grasses lie, let no vain visions
creep,
To our Beloved may it be, He giveth dreamless sleep!

HIDDEN

BENEATH the careless jest and easy laughter
Sad little ghosts of passion hide,
Like anguish from old stifled dreaming
Nestling in silence at our side.

Mocking and pale — within the haunted shadow
Of found too late and lost too soon —
Across our hearts they flit impassive
As silver seeking of the moon.

Always they kiss — their fond arms laced and cling-
ing —
The while we chatter far removed,
Dusk little wraiths of banished sweetness
Deriding us for love unloved.

A CURSE

OUT of the East nor West
 No tender-eyed shall come
To love thee first nor best,
 Or strike old echoes dumb.
Out of the North nor South,
 Passion nor pain nor joy
Shall lay to thy lips the waking mouth
 That made thee man from boy.
Body and spirit first-love bereft,
 Whole thou shalt never be;
And Heaven itself shall take what I left —
 Branded with love of me!

AFTER GLOW

HER dawn rose opal from a Summer sea,
Song was her birthright and her viol strings
Tuned to the voices of all raptured things.
Too soon Love heard her singing — even He
Who is all song, all joy, all agony,
The fire of Winters and the sun of Springs,
And with her trod the early blossomings
A little hour,— then was a memory!
Now Day goes in with Pindar to the feast
Of Gods, and happy trains pursue delight;
Across brown fields She turns unto the East,
Where her sun rose, not where he lies to-night,
Nor has that dew-lit presence ever ceased
To blur all later magic on her sight.

AFTERWARD

THOU most remaining of retreating things,
I die of beauty felt afar from thee!
Each moon become a ghost of dreams to me,
Each purple shadow, twilight of thy wings.
There is no chord the husky cello sings
But sets a ravening entreaty free
Once more to mate our human harmony,—
Each sense a prey to beauty-passionings.
Bereft of thee, Edens are stranger grown
Than that first nightfall on the exiled Eve;
Thou art become delight's pale enemy,
Thou lingering elusive undertone —
Desert and darkness less despairing leave
The heart, than Beauty's cup unshared by thee!

FROM A GHOST TO HER LOVER

SHE who was I — long done with April sobbing,
Lies with her face turned Eastward, rapt in the
slow embrace
Of reminiscent blisses, embalmed in lilac odours,
While passing seasons trace, re-trace, their webs of
vanished grace.

What drew your careless footsteps here to wake her?
She was so passionless, so tranquil dead —
Why did you pipe your human lilt above her,
Sweeter than all the jealous angels said?

Why should your coming rouse her passion's music,
Till her own heart-beat drowns the ebbing stream
Lulling the rhythm of her lyric slumber?
Waking, you rob her of the endless dream.

What hint betrayed a troubled pulse within her?
How did you feel the old desire but slept?
Drawing her by your echo of the Springtide,
Till mortal longing through her senses crept?

Cruel, O Cruel! Forcing her to listen —
To your lost voice of Pleasure's light recall,
She is a Ghost — I swear it! Dead and buried —
She dare not hear, you cannot break the thrall.

FROM A GHOST TO HER LOVER

Go! For her wistful spirit may not wander
Forth to you o'er the April hills again,
Though you may breathe her intimate in shadow —
Though you may hear her in the fragrant rain.

She who was I — long done with blossomed twilights,
With her fixed smile vowed rigid unto a further dawn,
The plighted one of Gabriel and deep of death
enamoured —
Shivering hears you pass,— re-pass,— and prays you
to be gone.

FOR A FLY-LEAF OF DANTE

PASSIONLESS Dante! Hades' warning pain
Lost power when you left pale Francesca there
Within her lover's arms. What woe despair,
What exile haunts those hearts whom Love hath
slain —

In death condemned to love that dreads no wane
Since he is Paolo — and she most fair?
Sensuous-souled and mystic-sensed to share
Their dream, nor deem it Paradise in vain!

The sadder shades in wistful torment gaze
As their young forms curved with the yielding grace
Of flame beneath desire's swift breath embrace —
While each, the other's wonder doth amaze.
For sake of arms that cling and souls that kiss
Perdition found together were but bliss!

THE INTERPRETER

A LAS! the Poet sings of love in vain
To those who nothing of love's torment know;
Who cannot listen sighing "Even so
I burned for Philomel"—"Thus was I fain
To grant the pleasure of my shepherd swain,"
"His eyes were thus,"—"Her mouth was sweet and
slow,"—

Each heart rekindled to a former glow
That through reflected passion flames again.

But Love, how came Rossetti to rehearse
Diviner intimacies all our own?
These tears he weeps are tears long shed for you,
The languor ours his shadow lines intone,
And our despair that makes the heart beat through
Each word,—till ours not his the haunting verse!

L'ENVOI

I WEAR no rue for the days that were,
Days of delusion as keen as pain —
Full of folly and passion and song,
Theirs was not rapture spent in vain.

What should I dream in the days that are,
Days of awaking to lonely truth —
If the days that were had never been,
Steeped in their yellow wine of youth?

What were the vows that we left unsworn,
In our Fool's paradise, Love and I?
What random sweet under moon or sun
Did our lips hesitate to try?

Twixt the joy of then and the calm of now,
Strange seas of fathomless being flow,—
I wear no rue for the days that were,
In the leisurely afterglow!

TO A GHOST.

SOUL of passion, mirth and tears,
Spirit of the vanished Spring,
In your marble stateliness
Do you hear me as I sing?

Does my heart-beat reach your dream?
Do the lilacs tinge for you?
Are they vanity at last,
All the sweet things that we knew?

Kisses on your lips of dust,
Even mine,— would naught avail,
Since between us, Loved and Lost,
Death has dropped the arras pale.

If I left the world to-night,
What my welcome out in space?
Should I find you, know you there
By the tears upon your face?

Ghost of Summers vanished long,
Folded hands no more caress—
Should we make of sorrow, song?
Poesy of weariness?

TO A GHOST

Do you hear me while I call?
Drink with me the spirit wine?
Once you swore your soul the slave
Of this flaming soul of mine!

What your fond vocation now?
Wraiths of women wan and fair,
Do they waft you,—earth forgot—
Though eternal wastes of air?

Did your vows and longing cease?
Is your spirit bond or free?
Crueller than Death this peace—
Creeping betwixt you and me!

THE LOVER'S ANSWER

THE Poets whisper "Love is swift to ashes"—
"The roses fall—our hearts to time must
bow"—

We kissed, and mocked them, as our passion deepened,
Must we accept their pallid verdict now?

Was it for us to follow lone and sighing
Where husky voices from their graves deride?
Accept the burden sore of lover's yearning—
Dolours and tears and wasteful dreams, untried?

Nay, if we knew of their lost Springs one dawning,
If Love one little moon has turned her face
Un-veiled,—ours be their sentence sad and final,
But ours their legacy of golden grace!

For us the flower! We caught the raptured cadence!
We twined with Love the garland way of youth!
Ours to interpret by that lyric moment
The beauty and the pity of their truth!

ALLEGRO CON GRAZIA

(THE SYMPHONY PATHETIQUE OF TSCHAIKOWSKY)

AT the silvering rim of darkest dawn
Still my wistful Lover lingering sate,
Moon and stars and rapture gone —
By my grave dispassionate ;
Sifting through his fingers warm
Ashes of my heart and hair,
Ghosts of sense set free at last
Wantoning upon the air.

(Pause)

Envious Morpheus binds no jealous dream
Closer than those amorous mortal hands.
— Can it be remembered tears

Cloud the seraph sarabands? —
Lips that kissed but yester-year
Muted now in smiling frost,
Sighing through the cypress trees
For the taste of pleasure lost.

(Sound of dry leaves falling)

Ye, who shimmering flaunt in life's bright zone —
Beds inviolate now await your mirth,
Ye shall wed as I am wed
With the sullen arms of earth ;
And your Lovers vainly seek

ALLEGRO CON GRAZIA

In some fickle paraphrase,
Groping futile to forget,
Haunted by a vague malaise.

(Sound of wind in bare branches)

Death — the unfaltering sower casts his seed,
Time — the unhindered turns his dripping glass,
And the sands that run between
Hearts of women 'neath the grass.
Unto them be Paradise!
Unto me, my Lover there —
Sifting through his empty hands
Ashes of my heart and hair!

THE OLD MUSICIAN

HE dreams of youth,
He dreams of love,
And while his fingers touch the strings,
The fitful sighs of passions past
Flit o'er his soul on gusty wings.

A random sob,
A sudden tear —
May find their echo in his chord,
Yet while he plays — the world is young!
You scant his joy who swift applaud.

Ah, wake him not!
The world is old —
The world is cruel,— while he plays
Happy he is and well beloved —
The gallant of his golden days!

THE LAST ECHO

WHAT cadence of the world's delight will linger
on,

When all my errant wanderings be dust and done?
Haply the benediction soft intoned at Rome,
Losing its way in cloudy incense 'neath the dome;
Or when from slender towers escape the cloistered
sighs

Of vesper bells to ring down oleander skies;
Or thud of running Cossack horse on morning grass,
Chilling the startled blood beyond the bugler's brass.

Perchance the nightingales of Greece as passion
swayed

They sang the deathless sting of love from out the
shade;

Or baleful cuckoo's troubling voice, forboding ill
When shadows crossed the sun at noon, from glade
to hill

Of those enchanted deeps of leafy Fontainebleau,
Where romance lends a nest to wandering dreams,—
ah, no!

Nor doth the sea repeat it as her flood subsides,
Drawn from her moonward longing by her jealous
tides.

THE LAST ECHO

Nay, none of these within my soul will linger on
When the last ravishment of sense be dull and done!
Rather a human love word, fainting on its start
Across the distance from thy lips unto my heart;
Nor yet the wistful word that swooned upon the
wing,
But echo of our raptured silence following.

TO THE CELLO

THOU who hast sought as we—and never
found—

And seeking still doth haunt the Shades of sound,
We hear thy footfall thread the darks of pain,
Through crypts of Being wander forth again.

The sea reverberates within thy chorded strings,
Her swimming ecstasies and fair dead drownèd
things;

The wind doth sigh with thee from off far Pisgah
heights,

Fraught with the trembling mystery of forest
nights,

Ranging through starry passions unassuaged and wise.

The Poet's soul thou art,— his hell and paradise.

Throughout our buried life a wanderer divine,

Bliss cannot bar thee out or agony confine;

Thine adorations lift a daring breath

Across the barricades of love and death;

Thou art to us what thou canst never know—

The lifted veil of beauty here below.

TO A STREET ORGAN MELODY

FLUNG out upon the air through mists of snow,
Straight to the heart it rises from below,
That song so late Love's own!

A year ago
The world went mad beneath its subtle sweet;
Nothing so sad save one girl's face I know —
Wherein remembered beauty lingers, though
No longer queen of courtly revels now,
Grown sordid, half-desired, she as thou
Has wandered from Love's halls upon the street!

UNTO THE GOD OF PLEASURE

NOT all the Roman revelries forgot
Of mad Caligula, who did his world out-dare,
Enamoured to the lips of favourites and hot
With lusty wine and tyranny, compare
With him my lute would sing,— the God of Pleasure.
Sing my lute! Wake to some frenzied measure!
Feasters jaded,
Roses faded,
Crystal philtres — what comes after
Fillets twined with love and laughter?

Diana's temples on the far Ægean,
Nor Dionysus' bacchanals in green array —
Have raised their Gods a more delirious pæan,
Than we who reel at Pleasure's call to-day.
Hail the immortal tyrant, mortal Pleasure!
Sing my lute! Ring out a pagan measure!

Passioned glances,
Siren dances,
Harp and viol — what comes after
Kisses wet with love and laughter?

Cruel the despot is,— though outwardly
His sceptre marks the beat of every man's de-
sire —

UNTO THE GOD OF PLEASURE

His empire to the grave discerns no boundary,
His smile is bright as purgatory fire.
Sing my lute the chariot wheels of Pleasure!
Sing my lute! Ring out a brazen measure!
Neighing courser,
Bravoꝝ hoarser,
Red arenas — what comes after
Gilded death and love and laughter?

Loved as no monarch e'er was loved,— in vain!
From crown to lowly cot his tribute he pursues,
From every careless heart that follows in his train
He wrings the payment of his poisoned dues.
Wail my lute! Deplore in doleful measure
The ravages of our mad tyrant Pleasure!
Wail the crushed grape and fevered brow —
Wail the spent will and broken vow —
Wail the swift youth of squandered treasure
Bowed in the vassalage of passing Pleasure!

A CLUB-MAN'S REQUIEM

WARREN has gone ; and we who loved him best
Can't think of him as

“ entered into rest.”

But he has gone ; has left the morning street,
The clubs no longer echo to his feet,
Nor shall we see him lift his yellow wine
To pledge the random host — the purple vine.

At doors of other men his horses wait,
His whining dogs scent false their master's fate ;
His chafing yacht at harbour mooring lies ;
“ Owner ashore ” her idle pennant flies.

Warren has gone —

Forsook the jovial ways

Of Winter nights — turned from his well-loved plays,
The dreams and schemes and deeds of busy brain,
And pensive habitations built in Spain.

Gone, with his ruddy hopes ! And we who knew him
best

Can't think of him as “ entered into rest.”

So when the talk dies out or lights burn dim
We often ponder what is keeping him —
What destiny that all-subduing will,
That golden wit, that love of life, fulfil ?
For we who silent smoke, who loved him best,
Can't fancy Warren “ entered into rest.”

DECORATION DAY

FLAGS and the band and marching —
Of faithful veteran feet,
Fathers, young men, and children
With voices shrill and sweet;
And Lincoln's spirit marching in every shining line,
And Lincoln's peace and freedom lit with the smile
Divine!

Flags and the band and marching —
Banners that proudly wave,
May, green upon the meadows
And on the soldier's grave;
The boys in blue are ashes 'neath the lilacs on their sod,
But their souls are free forever with Lincoln and with
God!

Flags and the band and marching —
And the drum-beat's steady throb.
Pipe on above, O Robin,
To drown a sudden sob!
The laurel wreath for heroes dead! And a cheer for
all the brave
Who march with Lincoln's soul to-day to liberate and
save!

WHERE GOD IS

NOT only in the meetinghouse
That tops a windy hill,
Where droning psalm and discourse long
Warn of His awful will;
Nor in the hushed cathedral gloom
Replete with mystic sign,
'Mid kneeling worshippers devout,
We hear the heart divine.

But when the twilight sets a star
On heaven's amber rim,
When oceans rave or tempests roar
Their first creation's hymn;
In some undreamed-of providence,
Or mortal contact dear,
In some lone last extremity —
We find his presence near!

THE FAMILIAR GRAVEYARD

Across their graves impartial shines the sun,
In the recesses of neutral life
Where each went to his rest and none but know
His passing, misery, weakness and strife.

Regimented they lie, with all its regimented sleep,
And in the ranks of church and state they stand —
While each finds measure with it that which man,
In his brief march, made vain and low.

Across their graves impassive smiles the moon,
Whose paler light harmonious haunts their face
And writes strange shadow legends on their stones,
To cheer the weary journey of a name.

The ends to which each gave his years, survive:
A few remembering hearts remember yet —
Beyond this common mortal clay
Nature must justify, when men forget.

Across their graves impartial shines the sun,
The moonbeam lies on snowdrift as on sward;
May God's eye pierce this lowly neutral sod
And souls like theirs distinguish and reward!

THE CRYPT

BENEATH the edifice that men call Me—
Whose minarets attract the setting sun,
Whose portals to the passer-by are free,
Abides another one.

The heartbeat of the organ throbs not there,
To jar the heavy silence of the soul;
Nor low amen of alcolytes at prayer,
Nor bells that ring, or toll.

Unsought, undreamed save by a solemn few,
Who with a lantern lit of love descend—
To find the buried arches grim and true,
On which the walls depend!

THE MIDSUMMER OF A NUN

- I — July 20th — The Virgin's Eve
- II — July 22nd — St. Mary Magdalen
- III — July 23rd — St. Liborio the Bishop
- IV — July 24th — St. Christine the Virgin
- V — July 25th — St. James the Apostle
- VI — July 28th — The Feast of the Martyrs
- VII — _____

I

THE VIRGIN'S EVE

AT Vespers yesterday, I swore to say
A rosary each time my heart forgot
Its vows and thought love's wayward thought again.
The stained glass Saints in vivid choirs looked down,
Bathed me in fixed and abnegating smiles;
Saint Stephen in his myrtle robes approved
That love was guile, each time my eyes obeyed
The inviting arms of that great crucifix
That hangs between his window, and the one
Of fair young Abel stripped for sacrifice.
As bird escaped the snare of worldly ill,
My soul unfettered soared on holy wing,
In rapt communion with the Purified.
Alas! The Priest's last intonation fell —
And just from habit, still upon my knees,
I sinned.

I prayed, not as a Sister prays
For sinners lost outside the cloister peace —
But that old scarlet prayer of joy for him!

II

SAINT MARY MAGDALEN

WHAT penance is there done for love's dear sake,
So sore as putting love away, with lone
Committals of forgetfulness? I said
"Hail Mary!" o'er a hundred times last night,
Found consolation in Our Lady's name;
Her seven sorrows entering into mine
Drove the forbidden thought from out my cell.
I watched it furtive through the grating slim
Waft upward to the far oblivious moon;
Wondering if Saint or God shone in that vague
Benignant face I worshipped as a child.
If God is love, how strange he should condemn
Our love as mortal sin! He might create
Us as the Virgin lilies chaste and pale,
Performing rites of light and holiness
And fragrant incense white,—yet we are formed
To yearn for human touch, prayer of the sense,
A liturgy whose "amen" is a kiss —
Be deaf O Heaven! Forgive!

Sad women Saints,
Of ye alone henceforth I supplicate,
Till washed and blotted out this secret fault.
By all your passions past, your martyrdoms,
Grant me to hate as God would have me hate!
Nor spare the last bright vestige of a dream!

III

SAINT LIBORIO THE BISHOP

BETWEEN the holy offices all day
I never left the altar, where before
That crucifix by some dead master-hand,
In silent hope of mute deliverance
I knelt. On shadow avocations wont
The black-robed Sisters often went and came —
I dared not leave the shelter blindly sought
Beneath the greater agony of One
Who loved and suffered, just to spare the Lost
Their dread eternities. Before His wounds
Of thorn and spear my woman's hurt allayed;
Though His wide love for all a sinning world
Is not the same as one sharp dagger cut
That knows its way familiar to the heart,—
The love one woman suffers for one man
A little better or a little worse
Than all the rest,— as may be, which to her
Is nothing, as the world's ingratitude
Was nothing to its Victim slain to save.
O face upon the cross, you could forgive!
And he I loved could not. You talked serene
With that light woman by the wayside well,
You sent unscathed the idle Magdalen —

SAINT LIBORIO THE BISHOP

Yet such divine compassion leaves me cold;
The soul's high Bridegroom offering in vain
Ethereal espousals to efface
Indulgence from my passion-clouded heart.

Again my vow foresworn? Perdition's thought
Would violate the sanctuary's peace?
O tortured face above, no added frown
Upon that bleeding brow for such a nun?
Those pinioned arms spurn not the haunted faith
Of her who seeks some compromise twixt love
And heaven? The gaze is still of pity? Then,
Let me be wicked, lost, but hear the truth —
I love him best!

Now smite me to the dust.

IV

SAINT CHRISTINE THE VIRGIN

AT matins in humility abased,
As turned to stone by knees insensate pressed,
Before the empty hospice of my heart
The long years seemed as endless highways stretched;
Whereon as pious pilgrim faring forth,
At each poor wayside Calvary I paused,
In sacred fancy sought their shriving blest,
From all consuming, unangelic loves.
Till Satan, envious of sweet innocence,
With his insidious subtleties drew near —
And moved the sad Madonna in her niche
Above, to utter weary blasphemies.
As one distraught I heard her prayer —
“ Pity me, God! the woman lonely within the shrine!
Sick with the lavished incense, worshipped as one
divine;
Canonised, blest, forgotten — on prayer eternal fed,
Sated with supplication, starving for daily bread!
These hands nor clasp, nor conquer, uplifted to my
throne;
Nor lips of little children shall ever warm my own.
Pity me, God! the woman, Mother of Sorrows and
pain!
Loose me from adorations, make me a woman again!”

SAINTE CHRISTINE THE VIRGIN

Oh, white-coifed Sisters, was your calm so bought?
Beneath your folded hands are craters hid?
Oh, Convent Mother, scourge me, let me serve
The lowest! Be the least! So I dispel
The curse of pliant Eve upon me laid,
The eternal woman, quick at thought of him!

V

SAINT JAMES THE APOSTLE

AT Benediction suddenly they came
And bade me take my place within the choir,
Sister Beata being stricken hoarse,
And my voice of all others most like hers.
I had not sung since — sole my Lover knows
What place, what hour.

Ah well, I had no choice.
Obedience is the heart-beat of a nun.
But when the organ's brave Magnificat
Accosted space,— swept up on wings of glory
I heard my own voice music to the stars —
Angels or demons caught me, as I swung
Above high heaven, above these human bonds
That wound me for Christ's sake. My psalteries
Inflamed, lit torches that set all the dome
With love's immortal pageantries ablaze.

The consecrated canticles I sang,
Yet vibrant with the love a woman spills
As sacred ointment o'er the feet she laves;
Faithful though men deceive, changeless in change,
Through words that phrased divine fidelity

SAINT JAMES THE APOSTLE

Unto a world where all beside must fade,
With shameless rapture of the Seraphim,
I sang the love that never was,— sang out
The love of which we evermore must dream
And wake dissatisfied.

The measure broke —
To fevered lips o'erflowing cups I held;
The youth in us that will not die, I hymned,
The purple passions and the simple sweets,
The dawns no day can follow or fulfil,
A languid face faint 'neath love's ministries —
Eternal fragrance and eternal pain,
Eternal April and eternal love,
Seen through symbolic rainbows of glad tears!
Then whispers,— moving us to wonderment
If past the power of sense or self exists
A good no passion and no love conceive?
Till voices faltered — grew hysterical —
The candles flickered — dropped into the dark —

Thus was I silenced by supreme decree,
Bade evermore beneath a raven robe
To strangle that untoward nightingale
Transfiguring their dun beatitude
To vivid accents of apostasy.
Kyrie Eleison! God's will be done!

VI

THE FEAST OF THE MARTYRS

CONFESSED, admonished, absolution given,
The exacted penance to the utmost done —
Nay more,— indulgence won in grim excess;
Ravished by self-inflicted punishment —
Fasting and praying till by force they strove
To gently draw me from my orisons —
My spirit broken, spent but pacified
Partook the celebration of the Mass.
The festal hues of vestments blent confused;
A myriad of sacred candles streamed
O'er undulating ministrants who served
Devout, the radiant altar's mystic feast.
The cadence rose and fell; mute acolytes,
Symbolic genuflection, postured prayer
Proceeded rhythmic each from each, then hush —
Discordant jangling of a startled bell
Proclaiming elevation of the Host.

Beneath my downcast eyes a light mist swayed;
Within, gold-haloed faint the bitter cup!
Renunciation's cup that may not pass
Undrained — a blue flame circling at the brim,
Extended by unseen, supernal hands.
And for the first time, nun at heart, I wept.

VII

.

BUT afterward! What dreams unsanctified
Suffused that vision of Gethsemane!
How may a soul o'er Powers of Dark prevail,
If after strict observance of the Rule,
Night opens paradise renewed in sin?
Wide-ranging passion and the steady vow
Alike betrayed to venial carnivals,
By Foe in flame 'neath iris-hued disguise!

No Vestal I, save that my spirit fires
Incessant burn,—not unto heaven, but those
Forsaken altars of the starving sense,
Where beauty's various wonderments entreat.
No "Pax Vobiscum" shields unconsciousness,
In vain the "Tantum Ergo" warns between
Our phantom adorations each of each,
The "In Excelsis!" echoing supreme
To Love's mad miracle that turns to wine
Fit for a marriage feast, the mournful tides
Of cloister sleep. I was not cloister-born,
Nor Bride of Heaven to keep celestial watch
Beneath Midsummer's silver-vigiled stars,—
And, rid the fear of Purgatory's wage,

I trod the golden meadows of the Gods,
The nun's diurnal Virginals transformed
To lawless bacchanals of dream.

The bells

Recalled me to my pallet bed, at dawn,
My arms outstretched in semblance of a cross —
In my left hand the rosary close clasped.

A TALE OF TUSCANY

PRAISE to the eternal Maker of all men!
Praise Holy Mary and the Trinity!
Praise our Lorenzo the Magnificent,
And praise to ye, gay masking Florentines,
Ye youths and maidens who make revel here,
To hail the Spring's return o'er Tuscany!

Attend unto my tale — 'tis simply sung,
The plaintive folly of a youthful monk,
Too soft of heart and young of sense, become
Enamoured of the listless Lady Moon.
With litanies long strove he to distract
This mystic passion from his soul away —
But how his torment fell, it is my tale
Pacing one eve, in pious fervour wrapt,
His eyes above his breviary strayed —
And he in consequence did soft perceive
Fair Mona Luna bathing in the stream;
The Arno's murmuring courses glorified
Thereby. He was a youthful monk, unproved
By such device as tried Saint Anthony,
Nor guessed to lend unto a bathing nymph
His vision vowed to God, was deadly sin.
And as he watched, his passion mastered him,—
Trembling as tiny ripples on the shore —

A TALE OF TUSCANY

But deepening as the silences mid-stream,
Till when far out she seemed to slip beneath
The shallow surfaces, her soul asleep —
In agony of fear lest she should drown,
His saffron frock he doffed to follow her,
Just as an aged Father, late turned home
From some last office read a dying saint
No doubt,— laid warning hands on him.

Ah, he

A youthful brother,— guessing not his sin,
And penitent,— may our Lord pardon such!
Yet who shall say if his knees served aright
Indulgence for his craving eyes to win?
For oh, the Donna Luna was unsworn
To chastity, obedience or pain!
No mortal vow kept she, but fair and white
And amorous at heart, perhaps she cried
“Alas Madonna mia! Exiles we —
Will no man wed with thee or me? Alas!
For us twain supernatural, removed
From mortal mating; loveless and unloved!”
I say perhaps she cried,— for none may dream
The secret faith of woman, sinner, saint
Or moon.

But he — through nights of rain he prayed —
And rose a proven monk. With orison
And rosary he wore his days away;
Vespers and aves shrove him, till at last
One Summer midnight from the chapel dim
Unto his narrow cell he passed,— to find

A TALE OF TUSCANY

Her lying on his pallet bed — her smile
The calm white smile of passion after death;
So silvery and soft she came to him!
Ah, Mona Luna knew it was a sin —
The open casement lured,— she entered there
And with her came the breath of Summer night,
Firenze's flower-scented bride. Tuberose
And jasmine perfume swift o'erturned his sense,
He swooned upon his wayward Mistress' breast —
A gentle victim of her ghostly wile.
Then came a life of madness; day 'gainst night.
“Too sore he fasts!” the holy brothers cried;
“Too long his vigils! Now o'er ripe for heaven
The fires celestial hover round his head!”
Paler he grew; within his eyes there seemed
To strive a light of hell and paradise.
Hectic his flush — his rosary heavier through
His trembling fingers daily slipped its weight —
And every bead petition was for night!
Midsummer passed,—'twas on Saint Martin's eve
The end befell; as usual he crept
From shadow of the altar to his cell,
His Mistress waiting with her phantom guile
To take his shaven head upon her breast;
But stay — a golden jewelled chalice out
The sacristy he bore, and with it knelt;
While on the ruby's blood and opal fire
She laid her kisses, till they overflowed
With beaming ecstasies the sacred cup.
“So will I drink thee, Sorceress!” he swore,

A TALE OF TUSCANY

“ Drink all thy smile and my distraught desire! ”
And wildly drank he — then with closed eyes
Insensate fell upon the flagging cold.

They found him so when matins failed his due ;
Dead, unconfessed, unshriven and unblessed,
A heart of Tuscany beneath his frock.
Now of his legend there remains unsung
Only that on the tombstone of a monk,
Within a cloister yard Dominican,
The moon doth constant lay her pale embrace —
Doth love to dwell upon the name of one
Long canonised a visioned Saint.

To him,
A youthful brother, guessing not his sin,
And penitent, may our Lord pardon much!

TWILIGHT AT FLORENCE

A GAIN the fiery fingers of the scarlet creepers
write
Their brief Autumnal message on the wall of
Eremita,
Of villa and of vintage, and again the orchard sees
A low white moon entangled in her mesh of olive
trees.
Down the slopes of Bellosguardo the grape leaves hold
the sun,
While through the inner cloisters wan the purple
shadows run;
And wide-horned oxen, homeward turned, stride
rhythmic, cheek to cheek,
Fit for the sacrificial pyre of beauty-loving Greek.
Somewhere a sudden bursting of pomegranate
hearted song
Such as to sultry lover throats of Italy belong!
E'er over dome and palace night wraps her silken
husk,
Fiesole's enchanted lights come twinkling up the
dusk;
The Arno yields another day to dreams of afterglow,
And by the open Roman gate the Westering hours
go.
Climb, climb my lusty lion on the grim Bargello vane,

TWILIGHT AT FLORENCE

You will not reach the sky in time, be you however
fain!
Already die the distant fires behind the cypress
trees —
The vesper bells fall silent as the sleeping centuries;
While empires sink to ashes in the ragged sunset bars,
Over Galileo's tower swing Galileo's stars.

A LEGEND

'TIS said that they who once have heard
The bells in Life's high minster ring,
Heed not the chimes that cry the word
Of Avignon's young happening.

The bell of death — the bell of birth —
Reverberate within the soul,
While gaily swing the chimes of mirth
Or soft the vesper summons toll.

From angelus to angelus
'Tis said their hearts are inward bowed;
Though outward seeming lifts no truce
Amid the gay or toiling crowd.

Hushed may the pealing fall — or fling
Glad hail unto the breaking day;
Clear on the startled soul they ring —
The bells of Life's old minster grey!

RIVIERA RAIN

THE April rain slants southward
Across a silver sea,
The burden of its murmur
A tropic threnody.

It dallies in the vineyards,
The orange scents pursue;
It wanders 'mid the olives
Where hyacinths are blue,
It lingers in the almond trees
To flush them hues of dawn,
The jasmine dreams her lover
Has errant come — and gone.

It nestles with the violets —
In every footfall free
A vague beloved presentiment
Of immortality;
Where'er it lists to wander,
Forever in my heart
It falls upon a far sweet grave
To bid the flowers start.

Summon the light anemone,
Thy fragile beauties all,

RIVIERA RAIN

Those pale attendants of the dusk
That wait upon thy call!
Bid them come forth in victory,
Their ghostly fragrance fling
To cheer the mortal dust beneath—
Thou Gabriel of Spring!

Go, April rain, sing seaward—
Beyond the barren wave
Thy gentler destination,
A far sweet hillside grave.

IN THE PROTESTANT CEMETERY AT ROME

'TIS here, where inland tides through cypress trees
Flow from dream isles of soft Sicilian name,
In wave-taught accents sighing whence they came,
Weaving green songs and pagan sorceries,
That Shelley's restless heart finds dear repose
Near Keats' young dust strewn o'er with purple
bloom.

No loveless rigours mortalise their tomb,
Nor Wintry winding sheet of Northern snows;
Abiding favourites of the fickle year,
Oft may the signs of vernal solstice change,
Spring and her violets will never range
Faithless to Love's enamouring atmosphere,
Where stoicism wastes its chilling breath
On these who 'neath the ivy leaves are laid,
And all who wander questing in their shade,
Within these lyric haunts of Summer death.

TO THE BARBERINI BEES

EMBLAZONED high upon the canopies
Above Saint Peter's sanctified repose,
Hiving 'mid papal tombs in crested shows,
Swarming on pillar and on haughty frieze,
Cluster the proud old Barberini bees;
Who live on incense and forget the rose,
As they forget their brotherhood with those
Dear humble buzzy fellows, overseas.
Oh, tell me, little toilers, do ye faint
Never for lowly beds of mignonette,
Or mountain paths with gipsy flowers set?
What honey lurks in porphyry and paint,
Or what content in Summer days like these
For vain immortal Barberini bees!

BROTHER RENUNCIO

ALL day a monk in saffron frock
Unlocks the cloister door,
Nor lifts his dark ascetic eyes
Above the chapel floor;
— Ah, Spring from veins of Italy can never distant be,
While fair the dim Campagna green slopes down-
ward to the sea! —

All day he takes the pilgrims' dole
For sight of tomb or shrine,
Nor heeds the cypress tall unto
The lilac soft incline;
— Ah, love 'neath sky of Italy is never far astray,
And sweet the cloister-lilac's breath at Angelus will
pray! —

At even-song his beads he tells
Before a faded saint;
The impulse of his pallid dream
A Magdalen in paint;
— Ah, night more lovely than the day embraces Italy,
The nightingale's enamoured song completes her
witchery! —

BROTHER RENUNCIO

He does not see the promised land
That to his feet descends,
Amid the Winter violets
Begins and never ends;
— Ah, Italy and Paradise are near for such as he,
And in this blind immortal's hand lies now the pos-
tern key! —

My brother, failing heaven here,
Should you miss heaven there,
How sad through purgatory's fear
To miss life everywhere!
— Ah, life in hearts of Italy, makes mock of bended
knee,
And o'er the monastery wall her birds are nesting
free! —

THE SONG OF A SLAVE TO HER IDOL

A TEMPLE girl of Love's blind worship, I!
No wakeful muezzin calls me to my prayer,
For in a million trivial servitudes,
Wherever Love is, I — the slave, am there!

No golden bangles mark my postures light or ankle
bells the alien eye discerns,
Yet 'neath a fragile minaret unseen, my own heart in
the rising incense burns.

Let Azzan barter in the gay bazar and slip her veil
from her enticing face,
Or in some dim seraglio's musky dream the favourite
yield her slender body's grace —

Where brown-armed water boys will surely pass,
Fatma and Lalal lie within the shade —
Sweeter than yasmin breath the temple's spell upon
the bending slave of Love is laid!

I serve the Idol more than stars serve heaven,
Since dawns betray the passion of the sky —
Within Love's mosque I feed the quenchless fire,
By day, by night, a temple girl am I!

A SONG OF MARINERS

“**W**HAT wind shall bear us to the shade?
Our eyes go blind
With struggle of the sea and wearisome mirage;
No port we find,
And we are faint to guide our craft by any star.
O Fate be kind!
No more of siren songs we dream —
Or Circe’s breast,
Or golden apples of remote Hesperides,
Or guerdon blest,
We only cry for silence and eternal shade
Whose heart is rest.
Where lie those isles of afternoon,
Whose shadows lean
To heal us from these glaring glammers of the
sea?
Whose glooms of green
Shall fill a sense nor love nor beauty filled before
By heard or seen?”

Thus sang a mariner who held his forward watch un-
til he died,
And thus the vague pursuing voices of the waves
replied —

A SONG OF MARINERS

“ Turn back, turn back ye Mariners!
Your compass learn!
False lies your course! The lands ye seek, the
shoals of youth
Your taffrails spurn
For ocean’s idle leagues, and wilful wandering,
Drift far astern!
For visions of white fleeting sails
Ye steered aside
From pensive isles of far forgotten shade;
For roaming wide
And hungry sea birds lonely following,— the
sport
Of witless tide.
Endless and futile is your quest!
’Neath moons that wane,
And burning noons, across this desert of the
sea
Ye voyage in vain,
For forward ye shall never find the golden isles
Of youth again!”

THE SUPPLIANT.

POET, thy mouth full of flame-curving kisses,
Parian mouth, breathing sweeter than lute
strings —

Lures my heart far from my amber-eyed shepherd,
Seeking thy threshold!

Sadder than burden of song-weary Sibyl
Weighed down my eyelids by love-laden vision,
Victimised I by implacable Cypris,
Mad but divinely.

Dancing my dance of ineffable pleading,
All my white body a prayer of the senses,
Lift me up! Bend to thy suppliant kneeling,
Breast on breast cleaving!

Pity me tranced in immutable posture,—
Hush beyond wonder, impassioned beseeching—
Let the Gods answer, or smite me forever
Dead at thine altar!

CASSANDRA ON LEAVING TROY

LAUGH on, laugh on, ye faithless Trojans, laugh!
The while your city's bitter doom fulfilled
Sees rampired wall and palace chamber razed,
The shattered peristyles in ashes laid,
As she ye mocked for witless prophesied!
O God Apollo, did it not suffice
To curse the maiden of your golden choice,
But she from overthrow must fail preserve
Her country's weal?

Mad? Yes, and justly so;
As I behold my augured fears blazed forth
By light of burning Trojan citadels.
Would I were mad and so escaped disgrace
Of free-born woman, falsifier named!
I knew ye felt no boding, when dismayed
I bade ye tremble at the first faint sound
Of Helen's name that troubled Argos heard —
Whose magic, warriors turned not with their spears,
Nor could avert with blazoned shields of wise
Device, and cunning wrought. I warned ye smite
That name of Helen,— at which women paled
In dread to find their beauty less than hers,
That name men whispered bodeless of its power
Or sins unsinned unto her Grecian grace —

CASSANDRA ON LEAVING TROY

Imagined beauty, myth of Ilium,
Than all their loveliest loves more fair! Laugh, Troy!
Laugh on! Now is Cassandra mad indeed!
What tears so mad as laughter like to yours?

Till now untold my fate, save to deaf ears
Of Gods at sacrificial altars red;
Hear me, and may avenging Deity
And mindful Fury hear! For ne'er my guide
Was Mercury, the patron of deceit.
The fairest of all Priam's daughters I,
Cassandra, wide and triple famed for dire
Misfortune, beauty and divining power.
Nor arms most lustrous, horses panoplied
For war, seas with their gleaming galleys sown,
The spangled night, the sacred ilex groves
More beautiful,—her suitors swore,—than She,
The maiden Priestess of Fatality!
Apollo's Priestess of the cool green shrine—
Minerva's suppliant, by whose desire
Coræbus was compelled,—a warrior called
To Priam's aid in 'leaguered Troy's relief,
Who laid his arms and prowess at her feet.
His suit dismissed by death to those low halls
Of sunless shades, next Prince Othryoneus,
An ally hither come from Thrace,—besought
Her for her beauty, asked no other dower;
But he by Idomeneus fatal struck,
To Pluto's house of tears was forced retire.
Beauty accursed, with evil Helen shared!

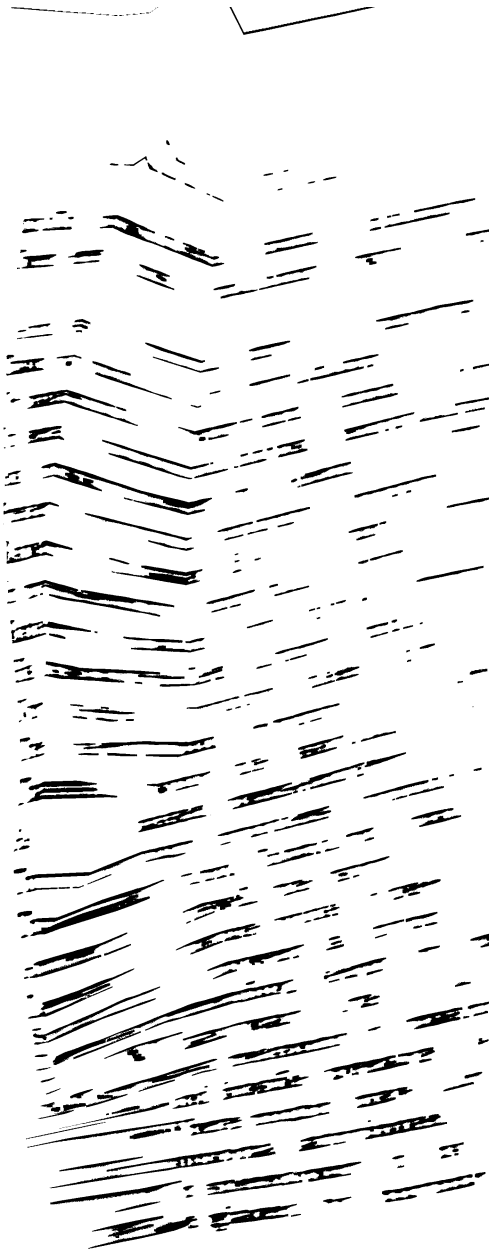
CASSANDRA ON LEAVING TROY

Apollo looking on his Priestess found
Her fair, and offered her whatever prize
She coveted for favour of her love.

For gift of prophecy I did consent
With Loxias — which once conferred, I swift
Withdrew and mocked the Tempter, who had sought
Of his most holy altar's ministrant
Ignoble use. And then, since it was held
Too all unworthy of a God, re-take
What he had given, on hid revenge intent
He did constrain a kiss exchanged. O kiss
Of doom, I dared not from a God refuse!
By whose excess of poisoned favour sweet
Confused, my lips shall never cease to mourn!
Incursive Deity, impassioning
Each in-drawn breath of men until they deem
Themselves the Lords of women evermore —
Spirit of wanton Capture — woe to thee!
For since the Gods avenge their love denied,
The altars are o'erturned, the Vestals wronged,
Both Gods and mortals to delirium brought
By mingling things of heaven with things of earth.
Woe for the kiss of Fate, that baneful kiss!
Woe to Cassandra, knowing all too late
Giving, he took. O tragedy of Love!
In that ill-reasoned kiss of God to maid,
The gift of riddles dark read plain was hers,
But faith of all men stolen from her truth.

CASSANDRA ON LEAVING TROY

Aid me, ye Muses! Tune despairing lyres,
And chaunt the direful song of Loxias' kiss!
Nor cease until his golden arrow-tips
Have pierced the coldest, most reluctant heart!
Sing how the Sun God all the sky suffused
With swooning stupors, ere he bodeful pressed
His melting passion through her scorched lips,
As were the glory of Immortals blurred
Within, yet at that fiery contact made,
As mortal with a mortal one,— then left
Her frantic, raving on discredited!
Almighty Jove! O is it God-like thus
Vengeance to wreak on hapless maids who shun
Those pleasures interdicted by thy laws —
Unfitting twixt a mortal and a God?
Such vengeful lust the wild boar well be-seems,
Whose prey slow-gliding him by stealth eludes
Along some sedgy river iris-fringed.
Because I would not turn from altar fires
To grant the madness of a mortal flame,
Apollo raged! The kiss he ruthless set
As price of his prophetic gift divine,
How was a virtuous Vestal to withhold?
When the Gods sue, resistance nought avails.
She served her Gods, he urged,— then why not serve
Her God for his delight? These lithe limbs bent
In sacrificial grace,— these amorous lips,
These Venus-haunted breasts,— why should she waste
In barren service of a common shrine?



CASSANDRA ON LEAVING TROY

Disaster murk,— nor shall thy madness serve
To save one city from the appointed doom,
One armed host from ruin's shame; though men
Shall surely weep — too late — the augured ill
Thy tongue deplores! ”

Alas for truth inspired!

As no blind beggar by the city gate
Would spurn the aid of open eyes, the world
Refusing sight of me, I am by wile
Of Loxias thus deprived to avert from Troy
The dread catastrophe; for what shall be
Already is. Futile the bellowing bulls
Of sacrifice, and foresight that but serves
To illumine hope deceived and labour lost!
Pleasure and peace are gone in ill foreknown,
No agony of mine can right the wrong,
Nor saving sight procure immunity
For them, most holy in my love. A sad
And wretched Priestess, I — of altars lone,
A vestal blameless,— save that I was fair;
No frenzied watcher of the chariot race,
Hot-flushed inciter of the flying steeds —
No Nymph enticing Satyrs to the dance
When Pan pipes up the vernal lure of Spring,
No Coryphee of Aphrodite's train,
Nor dew-drenched worshipper upon the hills
In Dionysus' fawn-skinned bacchanal,
But solemn-browed, uplifting unto Fate
A consecrated gaze oft veiled in tears.
Inspired sole by grim Eumenides

CASSANDRA ON LEAVING TROY

I am declared, brain-sick and sore distraught,
When overtaken by prophetic throes
Inflicted by the God; like to that bird
For Itys, Itys! wailing unassuaged,
Incarnate Sorrow, she, to whose lament
The Gods gave wings and voice to plain men's griefs
Forever!

From lips of divination
Ill only comes, no boon, the mockers cry —
As were the sacred Prophetess in league
With Hades' rulers sworn. In vain I warned!
The bridal woe of Paris, senseless cause
For siege prolonged and fateful destiny
Of war, foretold with eyes to heaven raised,
My hands weighed by your chains. In vain I raved!
Mad was I called, the oracles ignored —
But their fulfillment when did Time refute?
The siege once brought to pass, I refuge took
In great Minerva's temple,— but for nought,
Since impious Ajax, ravisher abhorred!
Seduced by rumour of my beauty cursed —
Did violate the laws of all the Gods
And robbed the shrines to drag me forth; which
straight

The irate Goddess terrible avenged,
From Jupiter demanding thunderbolts
And 'mid the ensuing floods the Locrian hosts
Destroying to the last. She still requires
Them bring each year as tribute, maidens twain
To serve her temple by most menial rites,

CASSANDRA ON LEAVING TROY

In tattered rags attired, their hair close shorn;
But even griefs like those Cassandra bore
Could not preserve her from the Argive King.
Victorious Agamemnon had sought out
The vanquished Priam's child for one more shame;
Drawn by no indiscriminate lot, as were
The lesser Phrygian maids, by chance conferred,
But for the love her stricken beauty moved,
Torn from the unprotecting shrines and given
As slave and paramour to Hellas' Lord —
Hapless, prophetic, beautiful,— Alas
For love unconquerable that enslaves
The Conqueror ev'n as his meanest thrall!
Whom neither the Immortals may evade,
Nor man, their changing suppliant of a day.

Wail for your daughter Hecuba! Wail forth
The curse of beauty drawing curse of love!
While yet she lives, shrill lamentations raise
And beat your breast with woe funereal;
Since over her no mournful dirge shall sound
Whose limbs on alien shores shall ne'er be wrapped
In decent garments by maternal hands,
Her pallid corpse a feast for ravening dogs.
By Phrygian unbelief the sacred shrines
Are now despoiled, their images profaned —
My own undoing swiftly verified
At pleasure of the Argive Potentate.
For nothing pray! Spare now your chorused hymn,
Your impotent libations cease to pour!

CASSANDRA ON LEAVING TROY

Too late the festive dance and heifer slain,
For nought reviled the injustice of male love
And face of Helen, Sorceress malign!

Yet there is retribution with the Gods,
For Jupiter and Loxias are both
To mortal matters lending high concern;
Now dizzy anguish mounts within my breast,
Prophetic rage o'erwhelms, and I perceive
Dardania commemorative rear
A votive temple, sacred to all maids
Who serve the Gods, nor 'neath the yoke of men
Are willed to live; revolting from their lust,
And consecrate to utmost chastity.
A babbler I, for this? Lie-monger called?
Let me be silent led to my captivity —
Calamity predestined by the Gods!
O Woe, O Earth, O God Apollo! May
My spirit soon hear echoes of that stream —
Scamander river dear to infancy,
On whose green shores my few bright hours were
nursed!

O agony of vision vainly borne!
Though none believe the oracles poured forth,
Troy and her slain by me shall be avenged.
Triumphant to these nuptials sinister
Departing Lord of Hellas, now I come —
More fatal bride than ever Helen proved,
No Priestess but a herald stern of Death,
Seeing my dusty bed in darkness made,

CASSANDRA ON LEAVING TROY

This peerless head crowned by one act supreme.
I come my Dead! Thrice shining Erebus,
For me illumined by familiar Shades!
My garland and my gold-embroidered robe,
My wand and myrtle wreath are cast aside,
Renounced the last insignia of the Gods,
Ere I, the sainted of Apollo, come
All unappalled to accost the gates of Night.
For, Mistress of divining power, I know
The end for Agamemnon now prepared.
Let Hades and all those beneath the earth
Be conscious of my words, for he shall fall,
If he return, by his supplanter's hand;
The house of Atreus be in ruins laid.
I see it plainer than their galley sails
That nodding summon from my native shore.
Mad, mad! ye call me, to the last defy
My solemn prophecy,— yet ye shall see
This proud despoiler in his crimson bath
Lie weltering beneath Aegisthus' blade,
While his abominable she-wolf slakes
Her thirst for gore with mine, and this despised
Cassandra, once for all, dismisses mute;
A bloody-taloned bird with clashing wings
That idly beat the wide ill-omened air.
Farewell, O ashen city of disdain!
Until the infuriate Erinnyës
Shall right my wrongs, on Troy I look my last!
Almighty Jove, o'er all supreme, behold
How tides of blood my oracles confirm!